

The Musical World.

(REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER.)

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VOL. 48—No. 53.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1870.

Price { 4d. Unstamped.
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CRYSTAL PALACE.—GREAT PANTOMIME,
"GULLIVER; or, HARLEQUIN BROBDIGNAG, THE FAIRY ENTERPRISE, AND THE DEMON BOW WOW." By H. B. FARMIE, and produced by E. T. SMITH. THIS DAY and during CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS. Miss C. PARKES, Master Percy Roselle, Miss Thirlwall, Messrs. A. Williams, Yarnold, T. H. Friend; Clowns—Harry Boleno and Adolphe Rowells, &c. 150 children. Mlle. Soltko and Corps de Ballet, &c. Gorgeous Transformation and other Scenes, by Mr. F. Fenton. Music by Mr. W. Corri. Beautiful Decorations, GIANT CHRISTMAS TREE, FANCY FAIR, &c. Palace agreeably warmed daily by fifty miles of hot-water pipes. Besides the Pantomime, varied Amusements, under the direction of Mr. NELSON LEE, at 12.30, on the Great Stage, including Senores GONZA and ROMAH, the marvellous Mexican Athletes of the Golden Wing; the DE LACY BROTHERS; EMMETT'S PERFORMING GOAT; the BROTHERS DANIELS; D'AUBAN and WARDE'S Laughable Ballet, &c.

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WEDNESDAY NEXT.

LONDON BALLAD CONCERTS, ST. JAMES'S HALL.
—FIFTH SEASON.—The new series of Concerts will consist of six, to be given on the first Six WEDNESDAYS in 1871. The following artists are engaged to appear at the first Concert, WEDNESDAY next, January 4th:—Miss Edith Wynne, and Miss Arabella Smyth, Mlle. Drasill, and Mlle. Patey; Mr. W. H. Cummings, and Mr. Santley. Pianoforte, Madame Arabella Goddard. The part-music under the direction of Mr. Fielding. Conductor—Mr. J. L. HATTON. The programme will contain a great number of new songs and ballads, written expressly for these Concerts by J. Benedict, Arthur Sullivan, J. Blumenthal, J. L. Molloy, Frederic Clay, F. H. Cowen, Comyn Vaughan, Hamilton Aide, Miss Philp, and Miss Gabriel. Stalls 6s.; Balcony, 3s.; Area, 2s.; Gallery and Orchestra, 1s. Tickets to be had of Austin, St. James's Hall; Chapell & Co. New Bond Street, Keith, Frowe, & Co., 48, Cheapside; Hays, Royal Exchange Buildings; and Booser & Co., Holles Street.

SCHUBERT SOCIETY, BEETHOVEN ROOMS, 27, HARLEY STREET, W. President—Mr. BENEDICT. Director—Hert SCHUBERTH. Fifth Season, 1871. The 29th, 30th, 31st, and 32nd Concert of this Society, since its foundation, will take place on the following dates:—WEDNESDAY, 15th February; WEDNESDAY, 5th April; WEDNESDAY, 17th May; WEDNESDAY, 28th June. Annual Subscription, Two Guineas (Reserved Seat), and One Guinea (Unreserved). The Card of Membership admits to all Concerts, Soirees, and Meetings of the Society and Branches.—"The excellent concerts of the Schubert Society afford opportunities to young rising artists to appear in connection with professors of great reputation."—*Vide Press*. Prospectuses may be obtained of Messrs. DUNCAN DAVISON & Co., 244, Regent Street, W., and full particulars from H. G. HOPPER, Hon. Secretary, 27, Harley Street, W.

ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE, GREAT CHARLOTTE STREET, LIVERPOOL, AND SHOPS ADJOINING,

By Mr. BRANCH.

On WEDNESDAY, the 11th day of January next, at Two for half-past Two o'clock precisely in the afternoon, at the Law Association Rooms, Cook Street, Liverpool, in one or more lots, and subject to such Conditions as may be determined at the time of Sale,

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The tenure of the whole is Leasehold under the Corporation of Liverpool, for the residue of a term of 75 years, from the 7th day of May, 1853, at a Peppercorn Rent.

The Royal Amphitheatre was conducted for many years, with great success, by the late Mr. W. R. Copeland, the proprietor, and is well known as a highly desirable theatrical property. It is now in the hands of Mr. Copeland's representatives, who have just received an offer for a Lease of the Theatre at a rent of £2,000 a year, the Lessee undertaking to expend a large sum in decorations, &c.

The premises fronting Roe Street are in the line of improvement proposed by the Liverpool Improvement Act, 1867.

Further particulars may be obtained on application to Mr. P. F. GARNETT, Solicitor, 54, Castle Street, Liverpool.

THE ITALIAN OPERA BUFFA COMPANY

(LIMITED),

THEATRE ROYAL, LYCEUM.

THE DIRECTORS beg respectfully to announce that the Season will commence on

MONDAY, JAN. 2,

WITH ROSSINI'S OPERA,

"L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI."

Isabella	Mlle. VERALLI.
Elvira	" BRUSA.
Zulma	" MONARI.
Lindoro	Signor FABBRI.
Mustapha	" ROCCA.
Haly	" FALLAR.
Tadeo	" BORELLA.

Conductor Signor TITO MATTEI.

TUESDAY, JAN. 3,

DONIZETTI'S OPERA,

"L'ELISIR D'AMORE."

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 4,

ROSSINI'S OPERA,

"L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI."

Doors open at half-past Seven, the Opera will commence at Eight o'clock. The Box-office of the Theatre is open daily from Ten till Five. Stalls, 10s. 6d.; Grand Tier, Dress Seats, 7s.; Upper Circle Seats, 4s.; Pit, 2s. 6d.; Amphitheatre, 1s.

THE ITALIAN OPERA BUFFA COMPANY

(LIMITED).

THEATRE ROYAL, LYCEUM.

SIGNOR BOTTESINI'S New Opera, "ALI BABA"
(THE FORTY THIEVES), written expressly for this Company, is in Rehearsal, and will be produced as early as possible. Boxes and Stalls may be secured at all the Libraries and at the Box-office.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.—Instituted 1822.— Incorporated by Royal Charter (1830).

UNDER THE IMMEDIATE PATRONAGE OF
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES.
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS OF WALES.
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE CHRISTIAN.
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS CHRISTIAN.
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

President—THE EARL OF DUDLEY.

Principal—PROFESSOR W. STERNDALE BENNETT.

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One of the valuable Cremona Violins, bequeathed to this Institution by the late Charles Kelsall, Esq., will be given as a Prize (should sufficient merit be exhibited) to the best Violin Student who shall have been a pupil of the Royal Academy of Music during the Three Terms immediately preceding Christmas, 1871.

By Order, JOHN GILL, Secretary.

Royal Academy of Music,
4, Tenterden Street, Hanover Square.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.—Instituted 1822.— Incorporated by Royal Charter 1830.

UNDER THE IMMEDIATE PATRONAGE OF

Her Majesty the QUEEN,
His Royal Highness the Prince of WALES.
His Royal Highness the Princess of WALES.
His Royal Highness the Prince CHRISTIAN.
Her Royal Highness the Princess CHRISTIAN.
His Royal Highness the Duke of CAMBRIDGE.
President—The Right Hon. the Earl of DUDLEY.
Principal—Professor W. STERNDALÉ BENNETT.

The LENT TERM will COMMENCE on Monday, the 16th January.
Candidates for admission can be examined at the Institution on Thursday the 12th January at 11 o'clock, and every following Thursday at the same hour.

By Order, JOHN GILL, Secretary.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC,
4, Tenterden Street, Hanover Square.

THE PROFESSOR'S POCKET-BOOK AND DAILY AND HOURLY ENGAGEMENT DIARY for 1871, Compiled under the direction of M. JULES BÉNÉDICT. To Musical Professors and others this work is invaluable, inasmuch as space is allotted in the diary to each hour in the day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Bound in roan, 3s. Free by post, 3s. 2d. Published by RUDALL, ROSS, CARTER, & Co., 20, Charing Cross, London, S.W. (Musical Directory Office.)

MR. MAYBRICK will be at liberty to accept engagements after December 25. Address, care of Messrs. HUTCHINGS & ROMER, 9 Conduit Street, W.; or, Mr. GEORGE DOLEY, 59, New Bond Street, W.

COLCHESTER.

ON WEDNESDAY, January 18th, BRISSAC's brilliant "VALE DE BRAVOURE" will be played by Mrs. JOHN MACFARREN, in her Pianoforte and Vocal Recital. London: DUNCAN DAVISON & Co., 244, Regent Street, W.

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MR. WILFORD MORGAN.

MR. WILFORD MORGAN, of the Royal Italian Opera, can accept engagements for Oratorios, Concerts, &c. Address—18 Surrey Street, Strand, W.C.

MR. ALFRED BAYLIS will sing, at Mr. Vernon Rigby's Concert at Wolverhampton, "ALICE, WHERE ART THOU?" on the 9th of JANUARY; and the same popular romance, at Stratford-on-Avon, on the 10th.

MADAME R. SIDNEY PRATTEN, Teacher of the GUITAR and CONCERTINA, begs to inform her Friends and Pupils that she has returned to Town for the winter season.—38, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square, W.

MDLLE. LIEBHART will Sing Mr. WRIGHTON'S New and Popular Song, "NORAH, SWEET NORAH," at Erith on the 9th of JANUARY. Order of all Musicians. Free by post for 18 Stamps.

"THERE'S A SWEET WILD ROSE." Vocal Duet. By the Composer of "What are the Wild Waves Saying?" "The Gipsy Countess," "The Flower Gatherers," &c. "A very charming duet."—*Vide Stamford Mercury*.—Free by post for 24 stamps.

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(IN C MAJOR),

FOR THE PIANOFORTE, BY

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BRIGHTON CONCERT AGENTS,
PIANOFORTE AND MUSICSELLERS.
LYON & HALL,
WARWICK MANSION.

THE 17TH DECEMBER, 1870.

A time may, perhaps, come, when our almanacks, instead of containing an endless number of the names of saints—of whose life and doings even the firmest believer possesses but a slight knowledge—when, we say, our almanacks will record the days on which were born or on which died those men who have exercised a prominent influence on civilization, in the broadest acceptance of the word. When such is the case, we shall write, at least in Germany, under the date of the 17th December: Ludwig van Beethoven. On this day, a century ago, was our great tone-poet baptized; so much we know. It is considered probable that he was born the day before. When a nation does honour to the memory of a great man, it really honours only itself, for it shows that it knows how to recognize and appreciate a great mind sprung from itself. Ludwig van Beethoven was a genius such as but rarely appears in the art-history of any age or people. It has sometimes been asserted that, among the millions whom birth, education, and circumstances do not permit to participate in a highly intellectual life, thousands would become great men, were fate to favour them. We do not think so, but even were it the case, we should recognize, in this instance as well as in others, the wise economy of Nature. Men cannot master too much at one time, and a considerable period is always needed ere any important, and therefore great, man has worked out his due effect.

The material points in Beethoven's earthly pilgrimage are pretty generally known—some few, however, require further elucidation. On the whole, his career was simple and quiet. There were none of the wonderful successes which surrounded with brilliancy the youth of Mozart—or of the passionate and almost historical struggles such as Gluck and Handel underwent in Paris and in London. Nay, even a journey to England, like that which crowned the old age of Father Haydn, is wanting in the life of Beethoven. The life of Johann Sebastian Bach alone offers still fewer points of contact with the wide, wide world! Even in his early youth, Beethoven's art became for him everything: a permanent source of employment; a delight; and the means of profit and of distinction. He was only twelve years old when he entered the musical establishment of the Elector Max Franz, filling in it the post of organist, pianist, and, subsequently, even of tenorist. Thus, at his entry into life, he proved the support of his family, and felt, no doubt, a certain self-confidence from the consciousness that, though scarcely a youth, he was, in his artistic as well as his social character, satisfying requirements, that we are justified in making only on mature manhood. The friendly reception with which he met in all circles at Bonn, especially at Madame von Breuning's, enlarged the sphere of his accomplishments, and, when hardly more than a youth of five and twenty, he went, well prepared, to the Imperial capital in which his genius and his reputation were destined to burst forth into bloom.

Through the Elector (a son of the Empress Maria Theresa), and those about him, numerous and intimate relations existed between Bonn and Vienna; and, thanks to the intervention of his old patrons, Beethoven was admitted into the first families of the Austrian aristocracy. The dedications of his works would prove, even were we not aware of it from other sources, how deeply indebted the artist felt to those of high birth. It is solely to what they did that Vienna owes the fact of being able to call the great man more particularly her own. It is true that, during the long period of thirty-four years which he spent there, he never sought or found a sphere of personal influence—as a teacher, a conductor, or even as a virtuoso. He gave the Viennese public an opportunity of hearing his works before any one else heard them—an opportunity by which they did not always profit. The concerts at which he did so—and at some of which he appeared as a pianist—were, perhaps, the only occasions that brought him personally into contact with the Viennese public. He had something better to do than to conduct an orchestra or assist young beginners with good advice—for he was one who directed music into new paths, and, by his works, exerted an elevating and guiding influence upon hundreds of thousands.

As far as a serious artistic life can be so, Beethoven's, taken all in all, may, perhaps, be termed particularly favoured. He was able to live entirely for his work, and quickly met with the highest appreciation; while the miseries attending a somewhat badly-managed bachelor's establishment—miseries springing from his amiable weakness for brothers and nephews—must not, in conclusion, be estimated too highly. But there was a grey thread running through his life. When only in his eight-and-twentieth year, he felt a diminution in his power of hearing. For about twenty years the malady seems sometimes to have increased and sometimes to have diminished, until it terminated in total deafness. In addition to the pang of only half receiving the living impression of his productions, and of subsequently not receiving it at all—in addition to the rent in his intercourse with the world, which, from the very first, possessed great attractions for him—he was most painfully worried, being a sensitive man, by all the experiments with

which the disciples of Æsculapius assailed him, and ashamed, for a tolerably long time, to confess his malady, concealing it, and thereby, probably, rendering it worse. Attempts have been made to explain, by this want of the material sense of hearing, many compositions of the last period less practicable and less charming than the rest; but the man who, with his inward ear, could hear the *Adagio* of the Ninth Symphony and the "Benedictus" of the *Missa Solennis* required no excitement of the senses. Whatever the amount of sorrow which the idea of the deaf composer may inspire, it is a great question whether his inability to hear did not contribute to render his nature more profound. A musician, as such, is, in general, indebted to his ear for more pain than pleasure—and how little of all we are obliged to hear is worth being heard, every one knows.

How, too, can we speak of solitude in the case of a man who, really and truly, was at home in a different world from that which surrounded him? Every one to whom has been granted, in any degree, the privilege of being artistically productive, can perhaps conceive, with blessed envy, what sort of an existence that of such a genius must be. If the slightest original notion exerts a vivifying influence, how shall we describe the ecstasy which must have been Beethoven's, when the first embryo-like notion of a new composition sprang up in his brain, assuming more and more distinctness of shape, and gradually filling his whole being, till all within him breathed, sang, sounded in melodies, of which he himself, a short time before, had no presentiment? And these tone-pictures filling the entire man did not vanish from him like light dreams—he knew how to grasp them with a hand possessing the strength of a giant; to hold them fast; to give them form and shape—to cast, as it were, even the most æthereal in bronze. Combined, too, with the marvellous charms this great man's fancy afforded him, was the ever-increasing and refreshing consciousness of his own intellectual power, the feeling of his mastery, the only true power and true freedom upon earth.

Especial interest is taken now-a-days in investigating most minutely all the details in the social position of great men. There is no objection to this, as long as we do not attempt to establish too close a connection between their works and their circumstances, for such an attempt leads to the most outrageous errors—or as long as we do not, with our enthusiasm reversed, endeavour to perceive the importance of their productions in the most trivial thing we learn concerning what they said and did. It is certain that excellent qualities of heart and disposition generally adorned Beethoven, and people readily forgave him his weaknesses. He met the poetry, the history, the great deeds of his time, with an active intelligence, nay, with passionate sympathy. But there were, and always are, thousands of men, his equals in elevation of character, in social virtue, and in noble conception of life, but not competent to produce anything that shall advance mankind. Beethoven, however, was able to express in wonderful works of art the lofty emotions and views that lived within him—and that is what makes him a great man.

Many, on the other hand, attempt to perceive the most essential greatness of such works in certain ideas, which, they assert, serve as a base, and which every one then endeavours to explain after his own fashion. But it is not that which a work of art conceals; it is that which it says, and the way in which it says it, that constitute its greatness. This greatness, moreover, is to be found in the conditions of that art of which we are treating. What elevates and inspires us, when we hear any of Beethoven's music, is the abundance, the originality, the boldness of imagination, the endless diversity of the melodies, and the charms they have for the senses, combined with their feeling, kindly power; their ingenious simplicity; their passionate energy; and their proud, high character—it is the way, so logical, and yet so free, in which they are carried out—it is the treatment, healthy, unaffected, and yet so original, of the harmony—the highly-coloured, individual employment of the instruments of sound—in a word, the fulfilment of all the conditions which a musical composition demands, if it is to satisfy all that can be expected from it. What that means is known to the many who, gifted and talented as they are, have endeavoured, and still endeavour, but in vain, to attain it.

Though Beethoven's name is full of import for the educated in all nations, and though his works have, since the beginning of the present century, continued to spread more and more in all countries, we Germans have a right to call him more especially ours. In political matters the bias of our nature towards the Ideal and the Spiritual may have been an obstacle in our way—but how much that is magnificent has it not produced! Such is the case with the love of instrumental music, that wondrous blossom of German genius, that most true poetry, without material subject, and without doubtful thoughts. Truly, it is a lofty people, from among which hundreds of thousands are continually assembling, in all directions, for the purpose of listening, with pious devotion, to the utterances which their harmony-inspired seers have delivered! In the very strictest, and, consequently, most energetic signification of the words, the instrumental works of our great

masters are tone-poems—and those of Ludwig van Beethoven are the most magnificent and the most sublime of any. How deeply what we owe him is felt on all sides, is shown by the festivals, now being consecrated to his memory. Neither the thought of all the great things that have been done and achieved upon the blood-drenched fields of battle, nor anxiety for what still remains to be achieved, has scared our minds into forgetting to consecrate the day which, a century ago, gave us the musician Beethoven. Let us hope that, in the fullness of the power it has victoriously attained, our nation will preserve its noble sense for the Beautiful, and its proud delight in all the magnificent things which its poets, in words, and in tone, have presented to it. And so, on Beethoven's Day, we exclaim to it, in the words of Schiller—

“Freue Dich, dass die Gabe des Liedes vom Himmel herabkommt,
Dass der Sänger dir singt, was ihn die Muse gelehrt!
Weil der Gott ihn besetzt, so wird er dem Hörer zum Gotte,
Weil er der Glückliche ist, kannst Du der Selige sein.”

Cologne, 17th December.

DR. FERDINAND HILLER.

ENGLISH OPERA IN AMERICA.

(From our Special Correspondent.)

In my last I promised you an account of certain American opera-singers whose merits are almost unknown to the British public. Among the ladies the foremost is Mrs. Belda Seguin, recently the contralto of the Parepa-Rosa troupe, a genuine artist whose vocal means and comprehensive talent enable her to do justice to every style of music, although it is in the works of the best masters that she shines most brightly. The music of Fatima in Weber's *Oberon*, Bridget in Auber's *Domino Noir*, and Cherubino in Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, could not be more chastely or beautifully sung than it was by this lady during the late tour. She taught the masses to love that which had hitherto been supposed to be above their appreciation, and such gems as “A simple Arab Maid,” “Araby, dear Araby!” the convent song in *Le Domino Noir*, and “Voi che Sapete,” were as sure to be encored when heard from her lips, as were the more familiar and generally popular “Alas, those chimes!” the huntress' song in *Martha*, or any other airs belonging to constantly performed operas, which the public knows by heart. But Mrs. Seguin has not only the voice and style of a richly endowed and thoroughly educated vocalist; she also possesses a rare amount of histrionic ability, though this appears more conspicuously in comedy than tragedy. Few actresses, whether singers or not, have so much natural humour; few can be so spontaneously whimsical, or do droll things in so original and attractive a manner. In the sunny-side of her art, Mrs. Seguin seems to revel, and guided by instinctive sympathy with her audience, while obviously enjoying her own sportive fancies, she invariably succeeds in making others enjoy them too. Mrs. Seguin is, in short, an experienced and thorough artist, worthy to take a leading position in any theatre in the world; though nothing I believe, would induce her to leave the English operatic stage, where, so far as I know, she is at present without a rival on either side of the Atlantic.

With M^{me}. Parepa-Rosa as soprano, and Mrs. Seguin as contralto last season, there was already a combination such as had never previously existed in America, and that the *entourage* was for the most part worthy of these very distinguished performers, is what I propose to show in my next letter. Meanwhile, I would wish to remind my readers that I am writing specially of the Parepa-Rosa company, because I consider it as the representative English opera company—the best there has ever been in the States, and consequently the fairest test for judging America's lyrically productive power, and artistic appreciation.

New York, December 13.

A MODEL STUDENT.

(Reported by Duff Short.)

Fashionably-dressed Joseph Cooke Cox, Barnard's Inn, Holborn, summoned Bow Street not paying cab fare.—Garlick, cab-driver, took defendant and lady Amphitheatre, left vehicle without paying fare. Waited, defendant came out, asked fare, 1s., and 1s. 6d. Defendant declined. Defendant sworn, said: Am captain 20th Regiment, half-pay, also theatrical student. Got out cab, put shilling on roof. Cabman perjured. Why not respectable cab-drivers, why not gentlemen courage, as I, to come forward such occasions? Thing soon put down then.—Flowers: You behaved badly; pay the money and 4s.

—Defendant: Lock me up.—Defendant placed in cells commenced to sing. Cox again at Bow Street Thursday, assaulting Griffiths of Gaiety Theatre. —Griffiths deposed in room at theatre, heard kicking at door. Defendant split panels, struck Dolby, and attempted follow on Hollingshead. On way to station dealt witness blow in face. Defendant been nuisance at theatre some time. Defendant remanded. Friends consulted on sanity.

THE BEETHOVEN FESTIVAL AT BOSTON.

We take the following from our excellent contemporary, *Dwight's Journal of Music* (Dec. 3rd):—

“The programme of the birthday week in Boston is settled, we presume, in its main features, though some societies and artists are still in doubt what they will do. The want of a fit hall for chamber concerts proves one serious drawback. The series of Beethoven performances will begin, according to the original plan, with the Fourth Harvard Symphony Concert on Thursday afternoon, Dec. 15, when the programme will include:—Part I. The third and greatest overture to *Leonore*; the great soprano scena from *Fidelio*, to be sung by M^{me}. Bertha Johannsen; Seventh Symphony in A. Part II. Andante and Adagio from the *Prometheus* ballet; and the Choral Fantasia, with Mr. Perabo for pianist, a select choir from the Handel and Haydn Society, and orchestra. The Choral Fantasia, as it contains the germ of the choral symphony, will be interesting to hear so soon before the performance of that sublime work on the 19th.—The Ninth Symphony Concert, which was to have closed the series on the evening of the birthday itself (Saturday, the 17th), is postponed to Monday afternoon, Dec. 19, owing to the engagement of many members of the orchestra at the theatres on Saturday afternoon and evening. This concert will be given under the joint auspices of the Handel and Haydn Society and the Harvard Musical Association. The symphony will be preceded by a short first part, consisting of the overture to *Egmont*; quartet from *Fidelio*; Andante and Adagio from *Prometheus*; Hallelujah Chorus from *The Mount of Olives*.—It is more than probable that *Fidelio* will be given on the Saturday evening of the birthday (and possibly on other evenings of that week) by the united Richings and Parepa English Opera troupes at the Boston Theatre. They are to give it in New Haven next week.—The Mendelssohn Quintette Club, who will return to Boston in season to take part in these festivities, will, besides rejoining the orchestra, give a chamber concert of their own in honour of Beethoven, probably on the Friday evening, at the Piano Rooms of Mr. Russell Hallet, Tremont Street. The programme will consist of one of Beethoven's earlier piano trios, the entire septet, one of his latest (posthumous) quartets, and some songs.—Mr. Ernest Perabo has already announced his purpose of giving a Beethoven concert at Horticultural Hall on the birthday (Saturday) at noon. Other artists, probably, have similar intentions, but their plans are not yet stated. Enough, however, is already sure to make a commemoration worthy of Beethoven and of Boston.”

J. A. RÖCKEL.

There died at Cöthel, on December 19, Joseph August Röckel, at the age of 87. His name is known in connection with the introduction of German opera into England. The fact of his being a friend of Beethoven, and the Florestan selected for *Fidelio*, is matter of history, and will lend interest to a short sketch of his life. Born on August 28, 1783, at Neuenberg, in the Upper Palatinate, and originally intended for the Church, he enjoyed an education which proved the more serviceable to him, as, at twenty, he exchanged theology for diplomacy, entering the service of the Elector of Bavaria, as Secretary of Legation. On the outbreak of war between Bavaria and Austria in 1804, and the dissolution of the embassy at Salzburg, Röckel accepted an offer from the Imperial Theatre at Vienna, to be first tenor. Here his success was such that he decided on following up the operatic career. It was in the summer of 1805 that his “creation” of the part of Florestan gained him the recognition of Beethoven. In 1823, Franz I. appointed Röckel Professor of Singing at the Imperial Opera. In this capacity he produced some distinguished pupils, among whom was Henrietta Sontag. In 1828 he accepted the management of the Opera at Aix-la Chapelle. The year following he introduced German Opera in Paris, by means of a complete operatic company. In consequence of the success attending this scheme—the impression produced by his chorus being remarkable—Röckel remained in Paris till 1832, when Monk Mason, manager of the King's Theatre, induced him to try the same experiment in London. We still recollect the enthusiasm excited by this first introduction of German opera in England, and the impression produced by the first performances of *Fidelio*, *Der Freischütz* and other masterpieces of the German school, with a company including Schröder-Devrient and Heltzinger, and, as conductor, Hummel (Röckel's brother-in-law). In 1839, Röckel withdrew from the theatre, but continued to follow up his career of musical usefulness in his adopted country. In 1853 he returned to his native land, to enjoy the well-earned fruits of his active life.

B. E. E.

HAMBURG.—In honour of the Centenary of Beethoven's birth, none but pieces of his composition were played at the third Philharmonic Concert on the 16th December. The *Sinfonia eroica*, and the third *Leonore*-Overture were executed in a spirited manner by the band. M^{lle}. Clara Schumann played the E flat minor Concerto and the grand Variations in C minor. M^{lle}. Marianne Brandt, from the Royal Operahouse, Berlin, sang the scene and air, “Ah, perfido,” and three Scotch songs, with violin and violoncello accompaniment. This young lady, who is a pupil of Madame Viardot-Garcia, appeared, also, in *Fidelio*. Both in the concert-room and on the stage she was much applauded.

THE THEATRES AT CHRISTMAS.

If we look over the long list of playhouses open at this the most theatrical season of the year, we shall find in Central London a still increasing tendency among managers to overlook the Christmas holidays as a time demanding any special kind of entertainment. There is, of course, a pantomime at Drury Lane, which is still really the people's theatre, and there is another at Covent Garden, which, having lost its nationality in other respects, elects to be ostentatiously national at Christmas. But here ends the list of pantomimes, as far as Central London is concerned. The Lyceum, which has sometimes been conspicuous as a third pantomimic theatre, is closed, and pilgrims in quest of harlequin beyond the precincts of the two "large houses" must cross the water or penetrate the remote suburbs.

A few years ago the absence of pantomime from a theatre open at Christmas would have implied a preference for burlesque, but now at many leading houses even the less national mode of celebrating the holidays has been abandoned. Mr. Buckstone, of the Haymarket, is so perfectly satisfied with Mr. Gilbert's *Palace of Truth* and Mr. Theyre Smith's sparkling comedietta, that he not only leaves his bill unaltered, but triumphantly calls attention to its unchanged condition. Mr. Halliday's *Nell* has taken up her abode at the Olympic, and does not consider the 25th of December as the quarter-day by which her lease is terminated. Mrs. John Wood, of the St. James's, and Miss Marie Wilton, of the Prince of Wales's, once set a high value on burlesque; but the former still continues to announce *Fernande*, the latter Mr. T. W. Robertson's successful comedy, *Ours*. Faithful to the "legitimate" cause ever since the production of Mr. Tom Taylor's *Aze and Crown*, the manager of the Queen's relies upon *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Mr. Phelps.

Some managers, not especially believing in the virtues of a particular day or week, but retaining a vague reverence for Christmas, love to anticipate the holidays. *Elizabeth*, which is now the burlesque at the Vaudeville, and *Whittington*, which holds the same position at the Royalty, were both brought out some time ago. The practice of bringing out novelties on Christmas eve, which was forbidden by the old theatrical law, but which has long been prevalent in the suburbs, has been this year adopted by two of the central houses. Besides, of course, Good Friday and Christmas-day, Ash-Wednesday is the only weekday throughout the year on which, by the existing law, theatres are peremptorily closed.

As the holiday-makers of the season necessarily comprise many semi-Puritans, who are ready to encourage every amusement that is not formally theatrical, the directors of non-theatrical places of entertainment are naturally astir. Foremost among these are the Christy's Minstrels, who have not lost one iota of their huge popularity, and who, as usual, celebrate Christmas not only by adding new songs to their programme, but during the present week abandon the lesser for the larger St. James's Hall, which is gorgeously adorned for the occasion, and perform twice a day. Mr. and Mrs. T. G. Reed have returned to the Gallery of Illustration, and Mr. Pepper, of the Polytechnic, has provided a goodly banquet of diversion and instruction, at which the tale of the Yellow Dwarf, as told by Mr. George Grossmith, jun., holds a conspicuous place. There is no wind so ill that it blows no good to the representatives of Madame Tussaud. The war, regarded everywhere else as a dire calamity, supplies Baker Street with several new and interesting figures.

COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS.

The annual choral festival in connection with this College took place at the Church of St. George the Martyr, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, on Friday, the 16th inst. The choir comprised about one hundred voices from St. Paul's Cathedral, the Foundling Hospital, Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, Lincoln's Inn Chapel, St. Michael's, Cornhill, St. George's, Bloomsbury, St. Andrew's, Holborn, &c., &c. The music used included an admirable service in B flat, by Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley, which was first sung at the society's festival last year, and the three prize works of Mr. F. E. Gladstone, organist of Chichester Cathedral, who has carried off the whole of the prizes offered by the council during the present year. Mr. Gladstone's compositions consist of a very excellent hymn tune, a highly original anthem, and an exceedingly effective "Andante" for the organ. Mr. Gladstone himself presided at the organ, and his magnificent playing of Bach's Fugue in D minor, as a concluding voluntary, gave especial delight to many present. Mr. J. Hamilton Clarke's anthem, which took the first prize offered by the College in 1864, was also performed. Mr. Limpus, Hon. Sec. conducted the music. Owing to the wet night, the congregation was not so large as on former occasions.—*The Choir (abridged).*

REGGIO.—"Il tenore Hemming,"—says *L'Euterpe*, of November 10th—"who possesses a sympathetic voice and sings with much sentiment, was encoined in the duet with Norina." The opera was *Don Pasquale*.

NEW PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

This society gave its sixth *soirée musicale* at St. George's Hall, on the 14th inst., and laid a very interesting programme before its guests. Here are some examples of the selections made:—Hummel's Pianoforte Trio in E was very well played by Mdlle. Bondy, Mr. Otto Booth, and M. Paque, and much applauded. Madame Eugene Oswald gave a pianoforte solo by Warzischek, and Miss Alice Mary Smith played, with Mr. Lazarus, her own clever Duo Concertante in A, for piano and clarinet. Other features of the evening were a capital violoncello solo by M. Paque, the singing of Miss José Sherrington and Herr Nordblom, and a solo on the pianoforte by Mdlle. Leonora Ferrari. Need we add that the company went away delighted with their entertainment.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.

This great and zealous body of amateurs was not likely to let the centenary of Beethoven's birth pass by without recognition. Consequently, on the eve of that event, a very fine performance was given, under the direction of Sir Michael Costa, of the First Mass (in C) and the oratorio, *The Mount of Olives*. Notwithstanding the unfavourable weather, Exeter Hall was crowded; and both Mass and Oratorio (about which we have nothing new to say) were heard with evident delight. That Sir Michael Costa directed the performance *con amore* it was easy to observe; and his example did wonders for those who acted under his guidance. The Mass (perhaps the most perfect in existence)—with Madame Sinico, Mdlle. Drasdil, Messrs. Vernon Rigby and Lewis Thomas, as the quartet of principal singers—was well performed throughout, the chorus doing their part admirably, and the orchestra being what it seldom fails to be under the direction of its most popular conductor. Rarely has the chorus of soldiers, or that in which the conflicting sentiments of the Saviour's persecutors and disciples are simultaneously put forth—one of the most striking and characteristic passages in the one oratorio of Beethoven—been delivered with more effect; and never, perhaps, has the splendid final chorus, which equals Handel in its simple majesty, though the hand of Beethoven is visible all through, been sung with more emphasis and precision. The solo vocalists in *The Mount of Olives* were Madame Sinico, Messrs. Vernon Rigby and Lewis Thomas, who all did their very best, and succeeded accordingly. On the whole, this performance was worthy the occasion.

The first Christmas performance of the *Messiah*, on the 23d inst., was interesting, not merely on its own account, but because Madame Pauline Viardot Garcia sang the whole of the contralto music. Madame Sinico was the soprano; Mr. Kerr Gedge (in place of Mr. Vernon Rigby, who was indisposed), tenor; and Signor Foli, bass. The second *Messiah* performance was to take place last night, with Mr. Rigby as tenor, and Mr. Santley as bass—the ladies as on the first occasion.

A CORRECTION.

To the Editor of the "Musical World."

SIR,—Allow me to thank you for the kind notice you gave of my concert, Dec. 13th; at the same time, I must beg a correction of the statement respecting Miss Ehrenberg, who is not my pupil, but, with myself, a pupil of Herr Lehmyer. The insertion of this in your next number will greatly oblige,—Yours, obediently,

3, Camberwell Park, S.E., Dec. 27.

CHARLOTTE JAMES.

AN URGENT PROTEST.

To the Editor of the "Musical World."

DEAR SIR,—Relying on your well-known courtesy, I take the liberty to acquaint the musical public through your greatly esteemed journal, that the reports which your contemporary, the *Musical Standard*, gives of my lectures on the Clavécin and Pianoforte, contain so much nonsense and errors that a most decided protest against such reporting is demanded in order to self-protection. The *Musical Standard's* reporter is either not blessed with a good hearing, or my pronunciation of English is so faulty, that the contrary of what I wished to say is understood. I must therefore beg a musical public not to judge of my lectures by the reports given in the *Musical Standard*.—I remain, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

39c, Onslow Square.

E. PAUER.

COLOGNE.—At the fourth Gürzenich Concert, dedicated to the memory of Beethoven, the programme comprised Overture, Op. 124; March and Chorus from *Die Ruinen von Athen*; Violin Concerto (Herr Singer); Pianoforte Fantasia (Herr Müller); and the *Sinfonia eroica*.—The Philharmonic Society also devoted a concert to the same pious purpose, when the pieces were: "Nachruf an sie;" E flat major Concerto (Herr Heymann), and C minor Symphony.

J. S. DWIGHT ON CHRISTINE NILSSON.*

We had no room to give our notes in order on the Nilsson Concerts. Let us go back and gather up a few.

Of the second concert, the main feature was the mad scene from Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet*. Of the music itself we could hardly venture an opinion, so absorbed were we in the wonderfully dramatic revelation of the singer and the actress. It showed a true and rare dramatic genius. Such an impersonation of Ophelia we have not seen before. Such swift and perfect changes of expression; the voice, the quality of tone always in quick sympathy with look and action; such alternation of violent mad mirth and wild despair and pretty maiden dreams of friends and love and pleasure; such beauty and such startling power of song, were worth going far to witness. And it was as a whole beautiful; whereas we commonly would rather turn away from these questionable stage imitations of the morbid anatomy of passion. She also sang the "Ave Maria" of Gounod (they have done mentioning Bach at all in this business!), in a high and pure religious style, nobly sustained by the violin *obbligato* of M. Vieuxtemps; and the "Last Rose of Summer," with Swedish dance air and "Old folks at home" for encores.

Third Concert, Monday, Nov. 7.—A tender and poetic French air ("Kenst du das Land?") from Thomas's *Mignon*, sung with refined and subdued feeling, and the "Miserere" from *Il Trovatore*, were her principal selections. The latter was given on her part with such thrilling vocal and dramatic power and intensity, that we almost enjoyed the hackneyed scene for once. Brignoli, outside, sung the tenor solo, with chorus of monks, entirely too loud; nor were the sounds subdued to due proportion in the repetition which was wildly insisted upon.

Fourth Concert, Nov. 8.—Best programme of the whole series. Mlle. Nilsson sang two arias by Mozart: first, the recitative and air, "Non piu di fiori" from *Tito*, with clarinet *obbligato*—(it was a pretty, but a silly freak, however, to drag the clarinetist to the front); and then, for encore, Cherubino's song, "Voi che sapete." Both were sung with pure artistic style and feeling, although our "east wind" had been trifling with the singer's throat. The recitative was truly noble. But first, in charming contrast, we should have mentioned the airy, playful duet by Blangini (better known in parlours here some two score years ago), which she sang in *sotto voce* with Signor Brignoli. It was lady-like grace and playfulness itself. Here voice and smile were one. The tenor, too, did well in the little responsive phrases. "Auld Robin Gray" was sung with such a power and truth of pathos, as we have not heard before since Jenny Lind.

Matinée, Saturday, Nov. 12.—Enormous crowd. Programme mostly repetitions. For Nilsson: "Angels ever bright and fair," which we liked better this time; Ophelia's mad scene; ballads as usual ("Home," Declecarian dance, "Old Folks").

Sixth, Nov. 14.—This time Nilsson sang the "King of Thule," ballad, and the "Jewel Song" from Gounod's *Faust*—not in her best spirit, something had ruffled its serenity; also in the quartet from *Martha*—rather a weak selection. But she was saving herself, no doubt, for the great effort, "Let the bright Seraphim," in which, as we have said, she showed a sustained power and splendour of voice which she had been keeping in reserve till then. The effect was electric.

Seventh.—Grandest of all Nilsson's efforts was the great dramatic scene of Beethoven, "Ah, perfido," in which she sounded the whole gamut of passion. It was given with orchestra, of course, and was felt, we think, by all to be an instance of great and noble singing. Surely the response of the entire audience both after this and after the Mozart arias should encourage the management to put in their programmes more of the music which is most worthy of a noble singer. Rossini's "Una voce" was also sung by her in a most sparkling, subtle, and enchanting style, with quite a dash of originality.

The closing *matinée* was rather a sentimental, popular farewell occasion. "Let the bright Seraphim" (even better than before), and the "Miserere" scene were repeated. For the rest Mlle. Nilsson sang only ballads—the same three or four that have figured in all her concerts. We never heard ballad singing which we liked better; but the variety was certainly too limited. Why not more Swedish melodies?

ESSLINGEN.—A satisfactory performance of Mendelssohn's *Athalia* was recently given by the Oratorio Association.

BONN.—Dr. Ferdinand Hiller, Mdlles. Buschgens and Schreck, took part in the Beethoven Anniversary performance on the 17th Dec., when the programme consisted of Overture, Op. 124; Prologue, by Herr Simrock; March with Chorus from *Die Ruinen von Athen*; C minor Concerto; "Kyrie" and "Gloria" from the Mass in C major; and the 8th Symphony.

* From Dwight's Journal of Music.

ABOUT NILSSON.

(From the "Providence" Press.)

Nilsson made a great impression in Boston, both in private and in public. There has been some damaging criticism upon her singing, but it does not represent the sentiment of the public at large, nor of the most intelligent class of the music-loving public. The enormous success of the concerts, in a pecuniary sense, represented the opinion of the general public pretty fully. No artist who has ever visited Boston, save Jenny Lind, has been able to draw so much money. Nilsson received many attentions from our best people. She was several times visited by Longfellow and others of the Boston *literati*, and on one occasion dined at Longfellow's residence in Cambridge, with a choice company. She also had personal friends in Boston, one a young lady now married and living in the vicinity of Arlington Street, who was a schoolmate in Paris, at Madame Collinet's establishment, where many wealthy young American ladies have been educated. She has found some of her schoolmates in nearly every city she has visited. A young Swedish workman in the organ factory of the Messrs. Hook, was a youthful schoolmate of the now great *cantatrice* in their native land. He called upon her one day, and was very heartily received, and the two, it is said, chatted a long time over the reminiscences of their childhood. Mlle. Nilsson speaks English fluently, as might be gathered from her singing of English ballads. She seems to have a genuine affection for Stephen Foster's ballad of "The Old Folks at Home," which she sang at nearly every concert, and which she invariably gives with a degree of sadness and plainiveness that lifts the homely song into positive sublimity. It doubtless reminds her of her own far-off home. Her singing of this song challenged the admiration of even such a fastidious critic as Mr. John S. Dwight, and here let me add that one of the best estimates of Mlle. Nilsson yet written in this country proceeded from his pen. Nilsson is very charitable, it is said, and gives away much money among her poor countrymen and others. She is beset the whole time, however, as every public artist is sure to be, by charity beggars, and besought to give her services in behalf of every sort of a charitable undertaking.

Her concert in North Bridgewater in behalf of the Swedish church at that place was a very generous act, both on her part and the members of her *troupe*. It netted nearly 2,500 dollars, a sum sufficient to finish the church and place the society, which is made up almost wholly of poor Swedish shoemakers and their families, entirely out of debt. Her country people were very grateful to her, and manifested their appreciation of her generosity in the most extravagant manner. When she returned to the cars the pastor of the society presented to her a Swedish prayer-book. I chanced to meet her in the evening after her return from the Bridgewater concert. She talked in the most animated manner of the affair, alluding very modestly, however, to the part she had borne in it.

Nilsson's engagement with the brothers Strakosch (both Max, who is in this country and manages the concerts, and Maurice, the brother-in-law of Adelina and Carlotta Patti, who is in Europe, are combined in the enterprise) is for one hundred nights at five thousand francs per night in gold, and an equal share of the receipts after four thousand dollars. The latter provision gives her half as much again as her salary amounts to, so that by singing four times a week, which is about the average she receives some fifteen or sixteen hundred dollars a night.

At one of the Boston concerts the receipts were nearly nine thousand dollars, which gave her considerable over three thousand dollars as her share, and the average receipts of the eight concerts were considerably over five thousand dollars per night. The great part of the four thousand dollars reserved goes to pay the heavy expenses of the management in other directions. He has several other expensive artists on his hands and must also expend large sums for advertising, printing, agents, travelling, etc. Nevertheless the managers of the Nilsson concerts will probably clear one hundred thousand dollars by their speculation, while Nilsson herself will be able to swell her bank account to the amount of one hundred and fifty thousand. Mlle. Nilsson has a smart and active agent, Mr. Henry C. Jarrett (not the well-known New York manager but an eminent operatic manager and agent of London), who looks closely after her interests. She also has a travelling companion, Mrs. Richardson, a devout English lady, who was formerly connected with Madame Collinet's school, and who has accompanied her since she first went on the stage. The fair Swede is much pleased with America and with Boston especially, and it is extremely probable that she would arrange to prolong her stay beyond the allotted time, but for an imperative engagement which takes her to London in April.

We learn from the *Utica Morning Herald* (U.S.) of the 9th inst; the important news that General Tom Thumb is in England.

MILAN.—The *Trovatore* writes as follows:—

"The tenor Hemming is a *débütante* with a voice sympathetic and delicate; he sings in excellent style, and when he shall have better learnt the Italian language he will be able to anticipate a brilliant career."

BRESLAU.—The fifth Concert of the Orchestral Union commenced with a Beethoven Overture, founded upon motives from the great composer's works, by Herr Ed. Lassen. The overture was exceedingly well received. Dr. Damrosch was vehemently applauded and recalled for his execution of Beethoven's Violin Concerto.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

The Palace pantomime is written by Mr. H. B. Farnie, and entitled *Gulliver; or, Harlequin Brobdignag, the Fairy Enterprise, and the Demon Bowwow*. Miss Caroline Parkes personates Gulliver. In the first scene the reckless youth makes his way into the kennel of Snarley-yow (Mr. Yarnold). He is threatened by this fiend, but the Fairy Enterprise (Miss Cole) releases him. Gulliver resolves to emigrate, but, before making final arrangements, goes down to Wapping to see his sweetheart, Saccharissa Sugarplum (Miss Thirlwall). The young lady is persecuted by two fine gentlemen of the period, Sir Lardy Dardy Doo and Captain Jinks (Miss Clara Shelley and Miss G. Clair). Saccharissa's father, Master Sugarplum (Mr. Arthur Williams) refuses Gulliver for a son-in-law, and the scapegrace of Wapping has another trouble to fight against in the untiring pursuit of the Sheriff (Mr. Marshall). Gulliver's mother (Mr. Friend) belabours her son's pursuers, and after a scrimmage at Wapping the scene closes, and Gulliver is next seen wandering through the capital of Lilliput, the country of the pigmies. This scene of the distant city, the bridges, the river, and the palace, is very picturesque. A great many small boys and girls are employed to represent the Lilliputian army and populace. The somnolent Gulliver is made captive by tiny policemen, and astonishes the Emperor (Master Percy Roselle) and the whole of his subjects by bursting his bonds with ease. The review of miniature troops, and the introduction of the small engines with their attendants are particular features. Brobdignag is next presented, and in the palace Gulliver defies the Giant King. His mother and Master Sugarplum have visited the island, been captured, and made into a pie, but our hero appearing soon inspires vigour into the captives. The upshot is that Gulliver gets taken prisoner. In prison he has to do fearful battles with cats, but when things have come to the worst the transformation takes place, which is very effective, and is elaborately constructed. It has one change—from a cool green water cave to a fanciful landscape, glowing with golden colour and studded with fairies, which is a brilliant success. The transformation is elaborately contrived, and enough to ensure the success of the pantomime. The comic business is never dull, thanks to Mr. Boleno, who has arranged this part of the entertainment. A bed-room scene full of practical joking caused incessant mirth. There is no doubt that *Gulliver* will prove a greater hit than any other pantomime yet produced at the Palace. Christmas decorations are very plentiful about the building, and the interior presents a gay and animated appearance. The Christmas tree is, of course, loaded with trinkets.

FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAINE.—Speaking of the fourth Museum Concert, the correspondent of the *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung* observes that, on the announcement that Madame Artôt-Padilla and her husband were engaged for the occasion there was such a demand for tickets that the stock was quickly exhausted. "Despite this," the writer goes on to say, "their engagement struck us as being neither a necessity, nor calculated to advance the high-art objects of the institution. The inhabitants of Frankfort had enjoyed every opportunity of hearing the two artists, who had then appeared nine times in opera, the regular sphere of their exertions and of their triumphs. This rendered it doubtful whether they would have anything new to offer us. It was, also, equally doubtful whether they would feel at all at home in the domain of classical music—the great aim and end of these concerts. The result proved that our opinion was not an erroneous one. Without her admirable singing of Rode's Variations, to which, in obedience to an uproarious demand, she added the extraordinary popular but somewhat too often heard, Mandolinata, we already knew that Madame Artôt was a first-class *bravura* singer. The air, 'Verdi Prati,' from Handel's opera of *Alcina*, though beautifully composed, and though tenderly and feelingly sung by the lady, was not calculated to produce any particular impression. The well-known charming duet, between the Count and Susanna, from *Le Nozze* most indisputably loses in effect when withdrawn from the stage and detached from the story, and when, moreover, it is given to a German audience in Spanish; more especially, if it has not become part and parcel of the singers, but is read by them from music. Stanziari's Romance, sung by Señor Padilla alone, with great feeling and delicacy, as well as the Spanish duet, 'Los Estudiantes,' sung by him in company with his wife, who herself played the pianoforte accompaniment, was not at all adapted to these concerts. Except in the one case mentioned, the public were exceedingly moderate in their approbation." The orchestral pieces, under the direction of Herr Müller, suffered in no way from juxtaposition with the vocal "stars" of the evening. They were, on the contrary, listened to most attentively, and vigorously applauded, especially the first movement of the unfinished Symphony in B minor, by Schubert, and Weber's overture to *Oberon*. The other pieces were Haydn's Symphony in B flat major, and Spohr's overture to the opera of *Dor Bergegeist*.

BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL CHORAL SOCIETY.

(From a Correspondent.)

The Christmas performance of Handel's sacred masterpiece was given by this society, on Monday evening. Though the concert was shorn of one of its attractions, by the absence of Mr. Vernon Rigby, on account of sore throat, the interest of the event brought together an immense audience, whose satisfaction was testified by frequent applause. The executants comprised a band and chorus of 300 performers, with the following principal vocalists:—Mme. Vanzini, Mme. Patey, Mr. Wilford Morgan, and Signor Foli. Mr. W. C. Stockley, as usual, conducted, and the organist was Mr. Stimpson. The execution of the choruses left little or nothing to desire on the score either of precision or expression, as will be readily understood; and though the society's band has not yet attained perfection, it is chosen with such care, and is so well disciplined, as not to be easily matched out of London. In general, the unity and precision of the choral singing were quite in keeping with the reputation of the choir, but in one or two instances, some slip in the orchestral accompaniment caused momentary unsteadiness. This was especially noticeable in "He trusted in God," and "All we like sheep." In the "Hallelujah," defects were clearly referable to the inequalities of the accompaniment.

Mr. Wilford Morgan was necessarily at a disadvantage in undertaking at short notice the principal tenor music, but he acquitted himself on the whole very fairly. His voice is one of considerable power; and though he failed to produce a great effect in the "Passion" music, he won and deserved considerable applause by the spirit and judgment displayed in the other tenor solos, especially "Thou shalt break them." Mme. Vanzini confirmed the very favourable impression produced by recent performances here, and successfully overcame the prejudice with which a section of the Handel loving public are wont to regard the efforts of every new aspirant in this trying part. Her brilliant voice and finished execution are admirably suited in "Rejoice greatly," which she sang with immense effect, but by far her most successful effort was in "I know that my Redeemer liveth," to the fervour and majesty of which she did full justice. Indeed, the success of this latter performance was so great that with difficulty the fair vocalist resisted an encore, her repeated acknowledgments of the applause seeming only to stimulate renewed demonstrations. Mme. Patey's singing has been so often and deservedly eulogized that we can really find nothing new to say about it. She gave "He shall feed His flock," with exquisite tenderness, and nothing could well exceed the fervour and pathos of "He was despised." Signor Foli in "Why do the Nations," displayed great vigour and dramatic spirit, as in "The people that walked in darkness," and "The trumpet shall sound." The quartets in the third part were unsteady, and one phrase was actually left unfinished.

PRAGUE.—A new comic opera, *Der St. Nicolaus*, music by M. Kopkoschny, words by M. Sabina, has been favourably received at the National Theatre.—The concert given by the Conservatory in honour of Beethoven's Centenary (!) was certainly not the best got up with the same object, but, at any rate, for originality, the programme was unrivalled. It contained three pieces for the oboe and the double bass, by other composers, and only two comparatively unimportant compositions by Beethoven himself. Assuredly, the science of "How not to do it," is in a flourishing state in the Hungarian capital.

LEIST.—The following compositions by Beethoven were performed during the "Festival Week" just devoted to celebrating the Centenary of his birth. 1. Sunday, the 11th December, in the Thomas-Kirche, by Riedel's Verein, *Massa Solennis*, Op. 123. 2. Monday, the 12th, in the Conservatory, song by Gellert: "Gott, deine Güte;" Sonata for Pianoforte, Op. 109, E major; Trio, Op. 37, B flat major; "Abendlied für eine Singstimme;" "Elegischer Gesang" for four voices; Menuet and Finale from the Stringed Quartet in C major, Op. 59, No. 3. 3. Tuesday, the 13th, Chamber Music in the Gewandhaus; Sonata for Pianoforte and Violin, G major, Op. 30, No. 3, Quartet for Stringed Instruments, C sharp minor, Op. 131; Sonata for Pianoforte, E minor, Op. 90; Septet, Op. 20. 4. Wednesday, the 14th, in the Theatre, music to *Egmont*. 5. Thursday, the 15th, Concert at the Gewandhaus: Overture to *Coriolan*; "Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt," Op. 112; Triple Concerto; Ninth Symphony. 6. Friday, the 16th, in the Theatre, *Die Ruinen von Athen*; *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus*, ballet. 7. Saturday, the 17th, in the Theatre: *Fidelio*. It may, moreover, be mentioned that, on the 11th December, the Amateur Orchestral Union performed the overture, No. 1, to *Leonore*, and the music to *Egmont*; while the concert of Chamber Music, given on the 18th December, by Riedel's Verein, was especially devoted to the great master; the pieces executed being Stringed Quartet, F minor, Op. 95; Pianoforte Sonata, in C minor, Op. 111; Liederkreis an die ferne Geliebte; and the Quartet in C sharp minor.

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

ST. JAMES'S HALL.

THIRTEENTH SEASON, 1870-71.

DIRECTOR—MR. S. ARTHUR CHAPPELL.

THE NINTH CONCERT WILL TAKE PLACE

ON MONDAY EVENING, JANUARY 9TH, 1871.

To Commence at Eight o'clock precisely.

Programme.

PART I.

QUINTET, in E flat, for Pianoforte, two Violins, Viola, and Violoncello—Madame SZARVADY, MM. STRAUS, L. RIES, ZERRINI, and PIATTI Schumann.
 RECIT. and AIR, "Tyranic love" (by desire)—Herr STOCKHAUSEN Handel.
 SONATA, in C sharp minor (The Moonlight), for Pianoforte alone—Madame SZARVADY (WILHELMINA CLAUS) Beethoven.

PART II.

PRELUDE, ALLEMANDE, and COURANTE, in D major, for Violoncello alone—Signor PIATTI Bach.
 SONGS, { "Der Neugierige" Schubert.
 { "Widmung" Schumann.
 HERM. STOCKHAUSEN.
 QUARTET, in G major, Op. 16, No. 1, for two Violins, Viola, and Violoncello—MM. STRAUS, L. RIES, ZERRINI, and PIATTI Mozart.
 Conductor Mr. BENEDICT.

Box Stalls, 5s.; Balcony, 3s.; Admission, 1s. Tickets to be had of Mr. Austin, 28, Piccadilly; Keith, Prowse, & Co., 48, Cheapside; Hays, Royal Exchange Buildings; R. W. Olivier, 19, Old Bond Street; and Chappell & Co., 50 New Bond Street.

N.B.—The Entrance to the Orchestra will, in future, be by the door in Piccadilly Place only.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NEMO.—Mr. Santley has only played three parts at the Gaiety—Zampa, Tom Tug, and Fra Diavolo.

SIR HUGH HUGH.—No. Mercadante was born in 1796, Rossini in 1792, Meyerbeer in 1794, Auber in 1784. The English poet who was born in the same year as Rossini was Shelley. Mozart died in 1791.

SIR CAPER O'CORRY.—By no means whatever. The actual and pious King of Prussia and Emperor of Germany *in posse*, is not nearly so musically, or, indeed, in any way artistically, given as his late enthusiastic brother, to whom we owe the *Antigone*, *Edipus*, and *Athalie* of Mendelssohn.

A. YELLOWHAMMER.—The date of Mercadante's death was that of Beethoven's birth—December 17; the date of Sterndale Bennett's birth was that of Handel's death—April 13. Rossini, although he lived to a ripe old age, had very few birthdays; he was born on February 29. "Yellowhammer" has simply muddled his facts.

A. T.—The verses of "A. T." are wonderfully graphic, but their immediate publication might possibly crush the new speculation in the bud, which would do less good than harm to the new speculation, which would rather at this juncture have good done to it than harm, and which we have reason to believe has had no reason hitherto to feel grieved at any expressed opinion of "A. T." which must be a consolation to "A. T." for the non-insertion of his verses.

PISCATOR.—There have been young lovers and young lovers—Romeo, the Chevalier de Grioux, Muller's young Miller, also the hero of his *Winter Journey*, and now the hero of *The Window*, or, *The Songs of the Wrens*, for which A. S. Sullivan has supplied music to the Laureate. Moreover, Othello was a lover; and surely so was Antony. We might multiply instances, but decline. Nevertheless, Paul was in love with Virginia. There have been young lovers and young lovers. Clive, for instance (not to multiply instances), was in love with Ethel (both Newcomes)—yea sorely in love; and so was Nemorino with Adina, Ravenswood with Lucy of Lammormoor, and (not to multiply instances), others with others. There have been (and are now) young lovers and young lovers.

HORACE MATHEW.—Our correspondent must consult a certain poet. "*Si el re de galantomen, dis el Prina sgavagrand, obligato dell avis!*"

ALDERMAN BLUST.—Certainly not. It was not Tintoretto, but Leonardo da Vinci. Cimarosa was not even born; and Baptista Porta could have had no more to say to the matter than Cornelius Agrippa.

DEATHS.

On December 17, at Naples, MERCADANTE, the well-known composer. On Christmas Day, Mr. THOMAS BROWER, Hon. Sec., Sacred Harmonic Society, and Secretary to the City of London School.

On December 24, HUGH SCHIMMELS, brother-in-law to Mr. JOSEPH WILLIAMS, music publisher, Berners Street.

On December 22, at Upper Norwood, WILLIAM CROZIER, 1st Oboe of the Crystal Palace and other orchestras.

NOTICE.

TO ADVERTISERS.—The Office of the MUSICAL WORLD is at Messrs. DUNCAN DAVISON & Co.'s, 241, Regent Street, corner of Little Argyll Street (First Floor). It is requested that Advertisements may be sent not later than Thursday. Payment on delivery.

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1870.

SIMPLY GOSSIP.

THIS Christmas time, and we don't feel in the humour for serious disquisitions. Why should we? Nobody would read such things just now, were they written with ever so eloquent a pen. But this, though a sufficient, is not the actual reason why we decline the rostrum and prefer the seat of the gossip. It suits our fancy so to do; and, really, if a "leader" may not unbend at such a season as the present, the case is hard enough to justify recalcitrance, in the form of an unbending determination to unbend willy-nilly. We shall, therefore, "gang our ain gate," which leads us in the direction of a very easy chair, and free and easy utterances.

Great defeat of the Germans in the North, it seems;—not in the French North (though that may come one of these fine days), but in the Scotch North. We reported the invasion of "Caledonia stern and wild," by a band of Berlin fiddlers and trumpeters, when it took place a few weeks ago, and indulged hopes of their speedy expulsion. If what we hear be true, the end has come very quickly indeed, and the enemy will either have to disperse or take himself off *en masse* to the place whence he came. Let us hope for the latter course, because the former would surely result in a descent upon the plains of the South. Only fancy such an accession to the Teutonic guerillas already in our midst! Why, good gracious!—it would realize the Prophet Joel's description of the northern locusts. Besides, there are quite enough who come south from Borean climes already. We look to see "blue bonnets over the border"—they merely obey a natural law of gravitation; but the smoke of German meerschaums on the summit of the Cheviots—faugh! Go home, then, worthy fiddlers and trumpeters from the much-be-trumpeted Vaterland. You may be needed there, not to play, but to join the "Wacht am Rhein."

Who are the Moray Minstrels? Are they amateur relatives of the Christy's? Do they black their faces—and, when bones and banjo are silent, ask each other conundrums? Not to know the Moray Minstrels may be to argue ourselves unknown; nevertheless we must frankly acknowledge that state of ignorance. It seems, however, that there are such people, and that they give "smoking concerts," whereat the sedative influence of tobacco presumably counteracts the irritation of minstrelsy, and keeps both mind and body in a state of equilibrium. A "smoking concert" took place on Beethoven's birthday; and the Moray Minstrels observed the feast by singing, in lugubrious concord of heart and voice, "*Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnum misericordiam tuam.*" Moreover, they put their programme into

mourning. Does this seem odd? If so, we hasten to remove so entirely false an impression. The Moray Minstrels did perfectly right, and acted with a just appreciation of what was due from them. Beethoven and "minstrelsy" are like children playing at see-saw; when one goes up, up, up, the other of necessity goes down, down, down. At present, as everybody knows, the master is in the ascendant, and there is danger that the "minstrels" will have to wash their faces. No wonder they lift up their voices and weep, while surrounding fumes speak eloquently of cloudy prospects. By the way, how did the "White Lilies of the Prairie" behave under the provocation of a Beethoven centenary? Did they, also, put on sackcloth, and smoke?

Monsieur Hervé has cropped up again, both at the Gaiety and at Covent Garden. We are glad of it. Is there not an old saying to the effect that nobody can escape eating a "peck of dirt"? Well, it might be inconvenient to take one's allowance of "matter in the wrong place" at a sitting; but, since we must have M. Hervé, by all means let the affair be got over as soon as possible, unless, indeed, the composer of *Chilperic* will confine his energy to illustrating pantomimes. We can tolerate him once a year, along with Dutch metal.

That is a very charming volume to which Alfred Tennyson and Arthur Sullivan, in conjunction with certain nameless but artistic "operatives," have set their hands. It will receive more extended notice by-and-by, but, meanwhile, the beauty of it may give a theme for Christmas gossip. Poet, musician, and handicraftsman have combined to produce if not "a joy for ever," certainly a joy for as long as paper and binding last. Another pretty contribution to the store of Christmas gifts is the book of "National Nursery Rhymes," issued by Messrs. Novello, Ewer, & Co. All the familiar stories which amused our ancestors when the world was young, and will be laughed at when the world is old, are in it, set to congenial music by Mr. J. W. Elliot, and illustrated by pictures calculated to send the nursery into a trance of admiration. If anybody were likely to make us a present of the volume, we would even wish ourselves young again for its sake. Last, and not least, we have to thank Mr. Henry Leslie for his extremely pleasant "Musical Annual," in which he gives us music of his own, music by Henry Smart (always thrice welcome), and illustrations by Millais, Marcus Stone, Val Prinsep, &c.—a most acceptable Christmas offering.

Talking of youth reminds us of how the years pass by. When these lines are read, 1870 will have but a few hours to live, and, dying, will give place to 1871. Let the old year go. It broke the promise of its first fair days—grew up into a thing of horror, "with garments rolled in blood," and now leaves a terrible legacy to its young successor. The outlook of the latter may be gloomy; but there is always hope in the unknown, and 1871, born amid storm and trouble, may die amid peace and joy. "So mote it be," above all in the experience of our readers, for whom our wish that the new year may be "happy" is not one of the empty "compliments of the season."

The performances of Italian opera *buffa* at the Lyceum Theatre commence on Monday, with Rossini's *Italiana in Algieri*, a charming work too seldom heard. Signor Bottesini's *Ali Baba*, one of the most important novelties of the season, is, we are informed, in active preparation.

The fifth season of the London Ballad Concerts, directed by Mr. John Boosey, commences on Wednesday evening, with a programme full of attractions. Six concerts are to be given on the first six Wednesdays in the New Year. No entertainments of the kind—and, indeed, Mr. John Boosey may be said to have invented this kind of entertainment—could possibly be conducted with more spirit, or better deserve public support.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE death is announced of Mr. Thomas Brewer, secretary of the City of London School. Mr. Brewer, born in 1807, at the age of sixteen entered the service of the Corporation of London, in the Town Clerk's office, and at the time of his death was senior servant of the Corporation. Mr. Brewer was elected secretary to the City of London School in 1836. In recognition of his services the freedom of the City was awarded to him in 1842. He was one of the founders of the Sacred Harmonic Society, in 1832, and its honorary secretary from that time until the commencement of the present season, when he was elected president, at the death of Mr. Harrison.

MERCADANTE died at Naples, at 7 a.m., on the 17th December, after a short illness having been struck by apoplexy on the 25th of November. The infirmities of age rendered him less active of late years, though his mind retained considerable vigour and fertility. Saverio Mercadante was born on the 4th of December, 1796, at Altamura, in the province of Bari, and belonged to a family in easy circumstances. From early youth he gave indications of musical talent which decided his future career. He was entered pupil in the College of Music at San Pietro a Majella, Naples, where he was educated under Zingarelli. He was still a pupil when he wrote his first two operas for Rome and Milan, and his success was such that he was specially commissioned to write for San Carlo at Naples. After this he visited Paris, Vienna, Madrid, and other cities. For some years he occupied a post of authority at Novara, until in 1840 he succeeded Zingarelli, as Director of the College of San Pietro a Majella, over which institution he has presided ever since, except during a short interval when he incurred the displeasure of Ferdinand II. by his liberal tendencies. Mercadante lost his sight in 1861. He was the author of nearly a hundred pieces for the theatre, and produced a large number of sacred pieces and much chamber music. His funeral was solemnized on the 17th December.

MELBOURNE papers publish a letter from Mr. Sothorn, in reply to a proposal that he should visit Australia. The writer says:—

"I should lose a good 16 weeks in the passages to and fro. That loss of time means to me a loss of £1,800—call it even £1,000. That amount has to be considered when making an engagement, for I leave a certainty here to run the risk of an undoubted uncertainty there. The public has nothing to do with this, you'll say; but I have, and as mine is the risk, so am I naturally anxious to lessen that risk as much as possible. Ergo, unless I see my way to a probability of making three times as much in Australia as I can do in England I should be unwise in leaving home."

Bravissimo! my Lord Dundreary. We are quite of your opinion.

WE extract the following from the admirable series of letters now publishing in *Punch*, under the heading of "Strawberry Leaves," and signed "Horace Walpole":—

"You Continentals behave so decorously in the theatre, that you will scarcely understand that in London it is the fashion with sundry persons to chatter and jabber in private boxes, to the annoyance of the audience and the disturbance of the actors. A few nights ago, one of our cleverest leading actresses had to come down to the footlights, and publicly complain that such interruptions, from a certain box, made it impossible for her to do justice to her part. But vulgarities are not a new invention. I remember seeing M^{de}. Vestris, who was playing Apollo in *Midas*, walk deliberately up to a box, in which sat a chattering old she-creature in a turban, and sang point-blank at her, 'Pray, Goody, please to moderate the rancour of your tongue.' The audience shouted the box-party out of the house. Aristocrat though I am, I have no patience with aristocratic insolence. There is the excuse that by audacious puffs and untruthful criticism folks may have been lured to a play, said to be good, and they find it is bad. Then they can go away, and not disturb those for whom it is good enough. No, sir, that is not quite an answer. They may not have ordered their carriage for an hour or more. Besides, if a man sells me a rotten apple over his counter, must I not say it is rotten for fear of annoying other folks who are content to munch his trash? But the fact is, the sort of people who make disturbances are the last people to know whether a piece is good or bad, or if they knew earlier in the evening, they are seldom competent to judge at the time they come in. The words of Mercury would be harsh after the popping of the corks of Bacchus. I wish the pit would try a bombardment of oranges."

It is easy enough to guess who is the author of these letters. Nothing better, if so good, has been done in their way since Thackeray's *Esmond*.

We all remember the tenor, Brignoli, at the Royal Italian Opera, playing, with Madame Fioretti, in *Martha* and other operas. In America, Brignoli is not only a favourite with the public, but he frequently brings actions for damages against railroad companies, wins them, and has to wait indefinitely. Here is a fresh instance, which we borrow from the self-illuminated pages of the *Cincinnati Chronicle* :—

"The tenor of Signor Brignoli's present life runs largely towards damage suits against railroads. He has just recovered over seven thousand dollars for injuries received in an accident near Logansport, Ind. But he has not yet got the money—only the judgment. Some of these Western railroads make very fast runs, but the scale of their payments for injuries is rather more *moderato* than *crescendo*."

Brignoli is known to be an "original," but it is doubtful whether he will be content to put up with a simple "judgment."

A CRITIC writing in the *Utica Morning Herald* (U.S.), compares M. Viueuxtemps and Ole Bull, and says :—

"Viueuxtemps' violin is above praise from us. In the matter of execution, we think he is equal if not superior to Ole Bull. But he is not so massive and grand. He plays with feeling and delicacy—often with real fervour—but he lacks Ole Bull's power. In his sphere however, it is doubtful if he has a peer."

Massiveness, grandeur, power, and Ole Bull! What a combination! With Viueuxtemps playing second fiddle to it, moreover! Are they not wonderful critics out Utica way?

ALTHOUGH new theatres are cropping up luxuriously in every quarter of London and the suburbs, with the sole exception of the City, and although theatrical patents now belong to not very modern history, there are still numbers of Her Majesty's subjects who do not believe they really "go to the play" save when they patronize Drury Lane, where the actors, revering ancient tradition, yet boast that they are "Her Majesty's servants." At Yuletide the persons entertaining this conviction are especially conspicuous, for, though high tragedy and genuine comedy have disappeared from boards once consecrated to "legitimacy," the truly national drama, the Christmas pantomime, survives in full vigour, and this, in many minds, is associated with the theatre that, in spite of many vicissitudes, remains an exceptionally national institution. As the Dutchman who, as a rule abstaining from theatrical enjoyments, makes a point of seeing Vondel's *Gysbrecht van Amstel* on New Year's Day, so does many a Briton, who despises all plays save those of Shakspeare, which he does not read, make a principle of beholding a Christmas pantomime performed in a "large house." A stern belief that pudding and pantomime are essential to the ceremonies wherewith we celebrate one of the most important festivals of the Church, has long been deeply implanted in the breast of every genuine Cockney, and within the last few years the faith in Harlequin has been diffused over provinces where previously pudding alone was revered as the Christmas symbol. The audience of Boxing-night is not as other audiences, nor must the foreigner, relying on the evidence of St. Stephen's Day, infer that the English people generally look upon an overture played in the orchestra as an accompaniment to a vocal performance in the gallery. It is in the holiday week only that the "gods" vouchsafe to supply words to instrumental music, and on "Boxing-night," from the topmost seats of a house crowded to suffocation, they usually perform that musical duty to admiration.

CONCERTS VARIOUS.

MR. J. B. BOLTON, a new candidate for vocal honours, has recently given a series of four operatic and ballad concerts at the North Brixton Hall, assisted by Miss Pelham, Miss H. Pelham, Miss F. Taylor, Messrs. Stanley Mayo, G. F. Tear, Wade Thirlwall, F. Cramer, Lansdowne Cottell, and others. Mr. Bolton is young, but, evidently, knows how to use a good baritone voice. During the series he sung a varied selection of operatic songs and ballads, which proved that his repertory is far from limited.

MR. AGUILAR's last performances of pianoforte music, on Dec. 15th, consisted of the following compositions :—

Sonata Pastorale (Beethoven); Aréthuse, Melody (Aguilar); Fantasia-Improvisu (Chopin); Arabesque (Schumann); Study in E flat (Thalberg); Four hand Sonata (Aguilar); Miss Grace Aguilar and Mr. Aguilar; Lieder ohne Worte (Mendelssohn); Fantasia on *Faust* (Aguilar); Le Soir, Nocturne (Gonod); Esmeralda, Morceau caractéristique (Aguilar); Miss Grace Aguilar; Dream Dance, Couleur de Rose, Galop brillant (Aguilar).

PROVINCIAL.

COALBROOKDALE.—Mrs. John Macfarren gave a pianoforte and vocal recital on Tuesday, Dec. 20th, with remarkable success. A correspondent writes :—

"The Lecture Hall was well filled by an audience who warmly appreciated a programme which included a sonata by Beethoven, an impromptu by Schubert, Weber's 'Capriccio,' Sterndale Bennett's 'Musical Sketches,' and some pieces by Prudent, Brissac, &c. Miss Jessie Royd sang, with charming expression, Macfarren's 'The Golden Heart,' and Benedict's 'Rock me to sleep,' and gave the Scotch ballad, 'Within a mile o' Edinboro' town,' with arch vivacity. Mrs. John Macfarren was much applauded throughout the evening, and by general desire repeated one of her brilliant solos, Brissac's fantasia, 'Scotia.'"

LEEDS.—We take the following from the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligence* of Dec. 22nd :—

"The opening of the organ erected in the Methodist Chapel, Woodhouse Lane, by Messrs. W. Holt & Son, of Leeds and Edinburgh, took place last night. The instrument, which, compared with others in the town, ranks about third in size, will cost, when fully completed, about £800; and contains 35 stops. On the great organ there are ten stops, of which the claribel and the harmonic flute are very fine, whilst the sesquialtera and doublette are considered by Mr. Best to be very brilliant in tone. On the swell organ, containing 20 stops, the stop diapason and the karaulophon are particularly beautiful. The instrument is provided with the unusual number of eight couplers. It is provided with Holt's patent touch, and is blown by hydraulic pressure, also Holt's patent. Mr. W. T. Best, of St. George's Hall, Liverpool, presided last night; and the programme was eminently qualified to demonstrate the capabilities and varied beauties of the instrument, and we are glad to add that the organ gave satisfaction, whilst Mr. Best acquitted himself admirably. Mr. Best, we understand, expressed a very high opinion of the merits of the organ."

DUNDEE.—This town has been enjoying a very musical Christmas, what with two orchestral concerts, a *Messiah* performance, and other smaller doings. Of the first-named we read :—

"The orchestral pieces were Beethoven's 'Pastoral' symphony, his overture to *Fidelio*, No. 4. Nicolai's overture, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and Weber's *Jubel*. Great neatness of execution, careful management of details, and true expression, characterized the symphony performance. The overtures were also well played, and full opportunity was given to judge of the merits of compositions hitherto unknown to the local public. Madame Rudersdorff and Mr. Byron were the vocalists. Both sang two solos. Through some mischance the instrumental parts for Madame Rudersdorff's chief effort, *Medea*, had not reached the town, and we had to listen to Randegger's composition as sung to the pianoforte accompaniment of Herr Rothfeldt. Encored for Haydn's 'She never told her love,' Madame Rudersdorff substituted an Irish ballad. As almost the only light piece of the evening, it was acceptable to the audience. Mr. Byron's solos were 'Il mio Tesoro,' and a ballad from Mr. Barnby's *Rebekah*—the latter a melody in the Gounod style, richly set with ornate harmonies after Spohr and his school. Mendelssohn's Concerto in G minor was played by Herr Rothfeldt and the band. Mr. Carl Hamilton played a remarkably neat fantasia on Scotch airs on the violoncello. On this occasion he excelled himself."

BELFAST.—The local *Evening Telegraph* speaks as follows about a concert recently given by Dr. Leo Kerbusch :—

"The programme consisted of selections from the works of Beethoven, Mozart, Macfarren, Pissuti, Kerbusch, &c.; the feature of the evening being an original cantata by Dr. Kerbusch—*In the beginning was the Word*. This work reflects great credit on the author. Freshness and variety mark the entire composition. The opening chorus is succeeded by a recitative and solo for the bass, which Mr. Wood, a favourite in Belfast, rendered in a finished manner. A tenor solo follows, which was sung by Mr. Thackeray. This gentleman who possesses a fine round voice, of considerable compass, sang the part allotted to him with taste and finish. A duet for soprano and contralto was well rendered by the Misses Richardson. The cantata concludes with a chorus, 'And we beheld His glory,' in which the composer makes use of the fugue to great advantage. Fesca's grand trio in B flat, for violin, violoncello, and pianoforte, was performed with much ability, and contributed not a little to the enjoyment of the evening. The concert was brought to a close by Beethoven's grand chorus, 'Hallelujah,' from the *Mount of Olives*, sung in honour of the centenary of the composer. Dr. Kerbusch acted as conductor, and presided at the piano."

NOTTINGHAM.—The following is a condensation of an article from the *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express* of the 20th ult:—

"Last night the second of a series of Monday Popular Concerts took place in the Mechanics' Hall. The concert opened with the trio in C minor of Mendelssohn, played by Madame Arabella Goddard (pianoforte), Mr. Henry Farmer (violin), and Mr. Selby (violoncello). This was brilliantly given, the playing of Madame Goddard being especially remarkable for purity of expression and delicacy of manipulation; indeed, we cannot sufficiently express our admiration at the merits of the performance, which, as a whole, could scarcely have been surpassed. In 'Deh Vieni' (Mozart) the soprano voice of Miss Margaret Galloway was heard to advantage. Mr. Henry Farmer (first violin), Mr. Leverton (second violin), Mr. Myers (viola), and Mr. Selby (violoncello) were conspicuously successful in the quartet in E flat of Mendelssohn (Op. 12), and deservedly applauded. Miss Galloway sang with exquisite taste 'Rosebuds on thy grave are sleeping,' after which Madame Goddard played magnificently Handel's 'Harmonious Blacksmith.' The applause which followed this performance sufficiently attested the appreciation of the audience. Miss Galloway sang 'My mother bids me bind my hair,' and the concert was brought to a close by the concerto in G minor of Mendelssohn, the performers being Madame Goddard, Mr. Farmer, Mr. Leverton, Mr. Myers, and Mr. Selby. Mr. G. Essex, jun., acted efficiently as accompanist on the pianoforte, one of Broadwood's new patent 'iron grand,' which was generally admired."

MALVERN.—A correspondent has been good enough to send us the following:—

"On Wednesday the newly-organized Philharmonic Society, formed from the materials of the old Malvern Choral Society, gave a concert in the College School-room, which was kindly lent for the occasion by the head master. Much credit is due to the conductor, the Rev. A. Sewell, one of the masters of the college, for the great interest he has taken in the society. He brought together on this occasion the best body of performers ever known at an amateur concert in Malvern or neighbourhood. Moreover, a considerable number of professional vocalists and instrumentalists greatly enhanced the success of the concert. The performance consisted of a few secular pieces, and a selection from the *Messiah*. 'The winds whistle cold' was rendered with good taste, but in Sullivan's part-song, 'Christmas,' the tenors were weak and unsteady. Mdlle. Romano sang several recitatives and airs from the *Messiah*, which were most of them warmly applauded. This lady possesses a sweet voice, but of little power. The Rev. G. Cusance sang several solos—'Why do the people?' being the most suited to his style, for which reason the audience seemed anxious to have it repeated. Mr. Smith, of Worcester Cathedral, rendered several of the tenor recitatives and airs with very good expression. As regards the choruses, some wanted due reverence for the subject. 'For unto us a child is born,' 'Glory to God,' and 'Lift up your heads,' were given evenly, and the first-named was repeated. Signor Romano played two pianoforte solos. The concert was a good one, and the result must be satisfactory to the promoters of the society."

NILSSON IN ORATORIO.

Steinway Hall (New York) was of course filled when Mdlle. Nilsson sang in oratorio for the first time in this country. The *Sun* says of the performance:—

"Mdlle. Nilsson fully justified the great reputation that she brought to this country as an oratorio singer. There were many who at her concerts objected to her method of singing 'Angels ever bright and fair,' and who, founding their anticipations on that performance, concluded that Mdlle. Nilsson's oratorio singing would be characterized by an over-strained sentiment, and much liberty with the time and even with the notes of the composer. But these anticipations proved entirely erroneous. Mdlle. Nilsson sang Handel's music in a most devout spirit, with a reverent regard for the music as the composer wrote it, and for the sacred text. Her spirit was certainly in perfect accord with the theme, and she unfolded to us more completely than at any previous occasion the secret of her great reputation. There was, in the first place, a unity about the performance such as there never has been at her concerts. In place of the scattered fragments of song, first about one subject and then about another, the whole was knit together in sentiment. The key of feeling that the orchestra set with the solemn introduction was sustained to the end. And Mdlle. Nilsson did everything to keep that feeling intact. She laid aside the *debonnaire* manner that she is accustomed to wear at her concerts, and was in manner in accord with the occasion. Her voice seems specially adapted by its exquisite purity to sacred music, and in her singing of the great solos, 'Rejoice greatly,' 'How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace,' and 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' there seemed to us everything to commend and nothing to warrant objection. The intonation was pure and true, the phrasing especially beautiful, and the effect devotional and ennobling."

SCHUMANN ON THE FOUR OVERTURES TO FIDELIO.

"It ought to be printed in golden letters what the Leipsic orchestra performed last Thursday: *all four overtures to 'Fidelio' one after the other*. Thanks, ye Viennese of 1805, that the first one did not take hold of you, until Beethoven in a God-like *furor* hurled out one after another. If ever he seemed powerful to me, it was on that evening when we could overhear him better than ever in his workshop,—moulding, rejecting, altering,—ever hot and glowing, in the midst of his labour. Most gigantic did he show himself perhaps in the second onset. The first overture would not please; hold, thought he, hear the second and go wild,—and he set himself to work anew, and let the thrilling drama itself pass before them, and sang the great sorrows and the great joys of his noble lovers once again. It is demoniacal, this second overture; in some of its details even bolder than the third, the well-known mighty one in C. For even this did not content him; so he put it aside, and only retained single pieces from it, out of which, in a more calm, artistic way, he formed the third. Later followed that easier and more popular one in E major, with which *Fidelio* is commonly opened in the theatre.—Such is the great Four-Overture work. In the same way that Nature fashions her productions, we see in it first the tangled roots, out of which in the second the gigantic trunk rears itself, spreads out its arms to the left and to the right, and finally concludes with light and graceful foliage and blossoms."

We too, all of us, who listened for the first time to that first overture, can thank "the Viennese" for provoking the composer into giving us three more; but we cannot thank them for consigning so beautiful, so ideal a creation to comparative obscurity. Our feeling is that this No. 1 stands by itself, a thing complete and altogether lovely, the product of a deep, sweet, tender feeling; while No. 2, much bolder in its reach, more thrilling in its grand melodramatic effect of the trumpet scene, &c., is interesting chiefly as a rough, crude sketch of the inimitable No. 3. The pervading tone of feeling in the first is gentle, quiet, and reflective; it begins with a musing soliloquy of the violin,—a thinking over as it were in memory of "my prisons,"—after time has healed the wounds and wrought sweet reconciliation. The tragedy is past when this is written; the sentiment remains, a meditation on the beauty of the wife's devotion and the noble love of Leonora and her martyr husband; this lends the deep, warm, quiet inspiration to the overture. Naturally it was too unexciting, too fine, too idyllic, to make a hit at once in a Viennese theatre filled in great part with French soldiers. So he set to work to give them something more effective, more dramatic, even melodramatic, without being any the less a noble work of art. To do so, in the first attempt, he breaks the perfect spell, the rounded unity of the first prelude, retaining and placing at once in the foreground, as the heart and central motive of the drama, the prison aria of the Tenor, which here is introduced towards the end, and keeping up a family resemblance in the general character of themes and phrases; so much so that the yearning, soaring, syncopated swift melody that pervades the second and third overtures, seems naturally and logically born out of the first, although only vaguely hinted there. The overture lacked neither fire nor delicacy in the rendering, and it produced, we think, a general desire that it shall not again become a stranger to us.

BEETHOVEN AND THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

On the evening of Saturday last week the centenary of Beethoven was celebrated at Covent Garden by the performance of *Fidelio*. The house was crowded, particularly in the cheapest part. I was in the cheapest but one—the amphitheatre stalls; should, if worth a thousand a year certain, have occupied a pit stall; nay, perhaps the centre of a box, with a suitable companion on either side of me. The people encored the overture first played—to wit, *Leonora*, No. 3. They listened most attentively to the whole performance from beginning to end. Now, *Fidelio* is an opera of which the interest does not consist in sympathy with vice. Beethoven was not the composer to write music descriptive of breaking the Seventh Commandment. On the contrary, in *Fidelio* he glorifies conjugal loyalty—worthily, both by voice and acting, expressed by Tietjens. The public appreciation of a work founded on the basis of sentiments proper to man (especially woman), and not at all on that of the nature which mankind share with apes and the rest of the lower animals, appears to me a cheering indication. It is a symptom of progress, though partial, which may afford some little comfort to melancholy persons, disgusted and disheartened by the scene of brutality and backwardation at present generally exhibited by the surrounding world. *Punch.*

BEETHOVEN AS AN ORCHESTRAL COMPOSER.

We extract the following from a thoughtful article on the Beethoven Centenary, which appeared in the *Glasgow Daily Herald* on Tuesday week:—

"In writing of Beethoven's compositions, it is difficult to abstain from what some may consider exaggerated eulogy. Fully conscious of this, we have no hesitation in saying that we regard Beethoven as the only composer who ever had complete mastery over an orchestra. We are not blind to his shortcomings. He essayed to write melodies for the voice as flowing as those of Mozart, and sacred choruses as broad and as devotional in spirit as those of Handel, but in doing so he failed; and yet by many degrees he is the most consummate musician that ever lived. No one has ever approached Beethoven in his compositions for the pianoforte or for the chamber, but in his orchestral works especially he transcends all others. In these he seems to pour out his whole soul. Under his command the orchestra appears to possess powers which no other writer knew how to call into existence. He does not treat it as composed of many parts, but as one and indivisible. How varied is his manner—how capricious at times appear his details; and yet we find all tending to one harmonious result. How he fondles and nurses his muse with all the kindly sympathy shown by a mother to her wayward child; suddenly he raises a storm of restless passion which seems beyond his power to control, and anon—as if by the waving of Prospero's wand—all is gentleness and serenity. The great secret of his power lies in the intensity of his own feelings being so eloquently expressed by the orchestra, and thereby communicated to the listener.

We regard Mozart as the only writer of instrumental music entitled to stand upon the same platform as Beethoven. There was, however, a vast difference in the natures of the men, which shows itself alike in their lives and in their works. Mozart took the world as it came, enjoying it when he could, and when he could not, yielding resistlessly to fate, loving and sinning, but withal mild and tender—never feeling stormy passion, and therefore never expressing it in his writings. Yet with these differences, and being judged according to his light, he stands next to Beethoven. In saying so we do not forget the great talent shown by Haydn in his Salomon's symphonies, by poor Franz Schubert in his instrumental compositions, by Spohr in his *Power of Sound* nor by Mendelssohn in his Scotch symphony.

It is not to be expected that in one hearing of these wondrous inspirations the listener can derive even a passing satisfaction. To be able to enjoy them, even superficially, one must know something of the music, and only repeated hearings sufficiently disclose their endless beauties—indeed, to reach their depth, one must study every phrase, every variety of that phrase; nay, even every bar of the composition. A simple preparation for partly appreciating a performance of these works is to learn the subjects on which they are constructed; but the key to the proper understanding of Beethoven's symphonies is to bear in mind that each movement is generally written with a subject and counter-subject, into which are introduced one or more episodes. These episodes constitute the greatest charm of his writings. One can never tell how or when to expect them. They are somewhat startling at first, and appear, though spontaneously, as intrusions. They usually break in upon some charming idea which has captivated the fancy, and the skill of the composer is nowhere more shown than in reuniting the broken threads, and thus augmenting the interest. Other composers have attempted to imitate Beethoven in this respect, but without success; he stands alone as being the one who created the idea and who perfected it. But, to get into close sympathy with the composer, and be able thoroughly to enter into his wonderful creations, more is needed than a technical knowledge of the music. The young and thoughtless, and those whose lives have been one continued sunshine, will derive more pleasure from the sparkling music of France or the luscious melodies of Italy. Those only who have known days of sorrow, who have endured heavy trials or had their most sensitive feelings stirred, or above all, who have mourned the loss of their nearest and dearest, can fully appreciate Beethoven, for they only are able to realize the mental agony which he must have experienced before such conceptions could emanate ever from genius.

THE Christmas supplement to the *Graphic* contains a striking piece of poetic realism in art, furnished by Mr. Fildes, draughtsman, and Mr. Thomas, engraver. "The Vacant Chair," a faithful picture of the study at Gad-hill, in which the last pages of the last book of Charles Dickens were written, is contributed by the young artist who was engaged in illustrating *Edwin Drood*. The precise minuteness of photography, with a delicate tenderness to which photography is stranger, characterizes the details of this labour of love down to the grotesque little bronzes of fencing frogs among the writing materials on the author's desk.

BREAKFAST.—EPPS'S COCOA.—GRATEFUL AND COMFORTING.—The very agreeable character of this preparation has rendered it a general favourite.—The *Civil Service Gazette* remarks:—"By a thorough knowledge of the natural laws which govern the operations of digestion and nutrition, and by a careful application of the fine properties of well-selected cocoa, Mr. Epps has provided our breakfast tables with a delicately flavoured beverage which may save us many heavy doctors' bills." Each packet is labelled: JAMES EPPS & CO., Homoeopathic Chemists, London. Also makers of Epps's Cacaoine, a very thin evening beverage.

NEWS (?) FROM PARIS.

(By Balloon.)

Little by little Paris begins to hanker after the drama, and does not see why the theatres should be shut because King William and Count Moltke have cut off the capital from the world. In the first days of the siege the Government decreed that the theatres should be shut up. The plays of M. Scribe and M. Dumas fils would not, it argued, lead to that grave dignity of demeanour which befitted the greatest of sieges and the most awful calamity that had ever befallen France. They were right. Few things could more effectively bring Paris to its senses, and let it know what was meant by a siege, than the fact that, for the first time within its experience, it could not go to the play. But after a while, Paris did not take kindly to the remedy. Paris is not like Venice, the ladies of which, during the time of foreign occupation, would not go to any entertainment with which Austrians had to do. The French capital found the siege dull when General Trochu would not make sorties and the Prussians would not come out to be killed. So, while Fort Valérien was pitching shells, the citizens asked Government why they might not have a little music. The Government responded by so far relaxing its rigour as to permit oratorios in the afternoon. Thus the thin end of the wedge was put into the block of Parisian gravity, and now, it would seem, "vested interests" are driving the wedge home. Under the Empire, the Opera profited by a subsidy from the State, which the Provisional Government withdrew. Consequently the singers have suffered a loss which they bitterly feel; and the Government responded to their prayers by saying that they may sing provided they sing sadly. Henceforth they may give entertainments, if they perform nothing but serious music, appear without costumes, and devote the receipts to the victims of Châteaudun. It is easy to laugh at the odd mixture of gravity and gaiety betrayed by these regulations; but, after all, they are dictated by a just perception of Parisian necessities. The tedium of a siege is undeniable; and there is no form of recreation so much in harmony with the atmosphere of the city as serious music, none more pure, more effectual in assuaging grief or restoring a healthy tone.—P.

[This despatch has been a very long time coming.—Ed.]

MR. BEECHER ON ORGAN CONCERTS.

The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, in announcing to the congregation of Plymouth Church the new series of Saturday afternoon organ concerts in that church for the season of 1870-71, after giving the names of the performers, made some very interesting and sound remarks; he said:—

"You will allow me to say a word on the subject of these organ concerts. They were begun several years ago at my suggestion. While I was in Europe, both in 1850 and 1853, I was very much delighted and very much interested, in some respects, by the evening concerts that were given in various European cities; and I thought, if it is in the power of a hierarchy, using their cathedrals and their organs to give these concerts, why should not freedom do the same thing? Why should not free churches be able to afford musical entertainment and instruction, and make it accessible to all and common to all? And, when, after my return, the trustees moved, very wisely, I think, as well as very successfully, in the procurement of a new organ, it seemed to me that the time had come, and Mr. Müller, at my request, gave concerts, in a more quiet way, on Monday afternoons, without fee or reward, for two seasons, and performed himself, from week to week, giving, perhaps a *répertoire* of music more extended than any other one man has given in either of the two cities. These concerts became somewhat known in that way. When the present conductors of music took their place among us, it was my earnest desire that the same thing should be extended; and another day was chosen on which more persons could come together; and the concerts were in many respects re-ordained.

"Now, it is because it is organ music that I am so much interested in these concerts. I love music from a Jew's harp to David's harp. I love everything that is musical. No band goes through the street that I do not go with it in thought. Even the more humble minstrels, who perform under false appearances, I publicly confess that I have a sympathy for them, too. And I should go and hear some of these things occasionally if it did not cost more than it comes to. There are many liberties that belong to me that I do not take because I am tired of being hawked through all the papers. It is cheaper to let such things alone than to take my rights, and then be written about, and thought about, and talked about. I love all sorts of music. Give me the French; give me the Italian; give me the German; give me the wild airs of Scotland; give me the wails from Ireland; give me our own negro minstrel music. They all find, in different degrees, a response from my heart. But I cannot bear to see the whole community led off to any one style—certainly not to that which is not always the best style—of music. When I consider what the state of music is in churches, I find that it is largely operatic, a little disguised, but not converted. A great deal of the organ playing is not of organ music. If I am rightly informed, a great deal of the singing in churches is not singing of sacred, but singing of secular music—that is, with all the associations of the week on it. You have in the churches on Sunday a little slower pace of the same thing that you have in the concert-room during the week.

"Now, it has pleased God, in the midst of all the changes of the world to

raise up one instrument which in itself is the most complex and the grandest, that has the wildest scope, and that has in it more elements of power and beauty than, I had almost said, all other instruments. For it is itself a musical museum. It is the epitome of all orchestras, of all phases, whether strangled or wind. It has pleased God to make that a gift to the Church and the servant of religion. It has also pleased God to inspire men to create for the organ a school and body of music, large, historical, and as noble as ever was inspired on earth. And I believe that while we say, during the week to opera and to concert, "Play as you will," we have a right to say on Sunday, "Let us have ecclesiastical music." Let us have music that represents the more sober moods of the mind. Let us have music which, if it rejoices, rejoices in the Lord. Let us have in our organ concerts a representative music of the organ. You can get dances and polkas elsewhere. I never like to have dances and polkas performed on the organ. That is not its business. Not that the instrument cannot perform these things; not that occasionally they may not be introduced into organ-music in certain ways; but there ought to be in the public mind the means of estimating and of judging of those styles of music which are grave and full of moral feeling, and that take hold of the highest impulses and instincts of our nature. And it is for the purpose of making the community familiar with organ music that I have felt a deep interest in these concerts. And I believe that knowledge and taste are growing in this direction. And though multitudes of persons are not particularly discriminating, I believe—and I believe it from what I saw during the last two years—that the higher classes of music are coming to be more appreciated. I have noticed that the best performers were the most enthusiastically received, and that the really best music was the most cheered, while what might be called clap-trap music, that which goes by the name of *popular music*, was received the most nearly with silence and disapprobation. I never felt a greater pleasure than that which I felt when I heard *ella podrida* music—music made up of snatches here and there—implying that that was all that you could understand, followed by dead silence. It was a compliment of which you yourself did not appreciate the weight. And when some of the noblest things of the most inspired musicians were received with enthusiasm, I felt proud of you, and blessed God, and took courage.

"Now we enter upon another season. The concert will be held one hour. The main performances will be on the organ; but there will also be some singing and lighter music for the sake of interesting you between the more voluminous and weighty passages of the organ music."

THE TRANSLATOR OF TANNHAUSER.

In Paris there lived a young and unknown poet, Edward Roche, of great talent, and of the highest education, but totally unknown, and without a friend, even, to give him a helping hand in the career of letters. Despairing of literary success, Roche obtained an insignificant post in the custom-house. To all appearance he was likely thus to protract a miserable and inglorious existence with no opportunity of exhibiting the talents which he undoubtedly possessed. His luck seemed to have left him, and he was despondent accordingly. One day, while Roche was working in the custom-house office, which happened to be close to the railway station, his attention was aroused by tones of angry expostulation and loud remonstrance heard just beneath the window. An irascible German passenger was loudly declaiming against the absurdity of the rules by which he was troubled through the short-sighted wisdom of the railway administration. Roche went out and heard the stranger, whose passion culminated in a strong vein of soliloquy, address himself as Wagner. The young man seized the opportunity. He stepped forward, bowed to the stranger and speedily by his intervention made his vexed path straight. Wagner was profuse in his thanks; Roche was delighted that he was able to render even the slightest service to so illustrious a man. Wagner's enormous and soul-controlling vanity must have been touched; Roche fancied he saw his opportunity, and commenced to hum some of the melodies from *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*. "Oh!" said Wagner, "this is a splendid omen for me. The first Parisian I meet knows my music and admires it. Liszt shall know this. Sir, we must see each other again."

Such was the commencement of an acquaintance destined to be eventful to both,—tragic to one. Wagner grew to entertain a high opinion of Edward Roche; and when he looked for a translator of *Tannhäuser*, he thought he could find none better than the young man who had proved his saviour in the railway episode. Wagner offered Roche the work, and Roche in an ecstasy of joy, it is needless to say, accepted it. But the poor fellow little knew what he would have to encounter. He gave a whole year to the work, sacrificing many a night's sleep, and devoting to the task every instant of the day which was not employed at the counting house. Roche soon found that his illustrious employer was, to use his own words, "a dreadful man." Never was task-master of the Egyptians so remorselessly exacting. Capable of prodigious exertions, Wagner measured the ability of others by himself, and Roche fairly had not a moment's rest. When the young clerk contrived to obtain a holiday from his office, every moment was absorbed by the demands of the author of *Tannhäuser*. On such occasions as these, Roche thus describes the programme of the day's proceedings:—"At 7 o'clock in the morning we sat down to work, and without rest or pause went on till noon. There I sat over my desk—stooping, writing, blotting, correcting, searching painfully for

the syllables which accorded best with particular notes. Meanwhile, Wagner with flaming eyes and angry expression, now strode up and down impatiently. "Forward! forward!"—at 12 or 1 o'clock, wearied and sick, faint with hunger, and with aching fingers, I would let my pen drop, and sink back in my chair. Then would the Master ask me, in tones of indignation and surprise, what was the matter. "Oh, I am hungry," I would mutter. Generally he would reply, "Very well; I did not think of that; we will eat something quickly and continue again." I was suffered to swallow a few morsels, not more, and then I was spurred on to resume my toil, and continued till night. I grew exhausted, but he cared not; my head glowed like fire. I became driven to desperation at this ceaseless hunt for appropriate syllables and words. It was impossible to please him. As for Wagner himself he was still as fresh as ever. Nothing seemed to tell upon those exhaustless energies. Still he strode up and down the room, or, striking the notes of the piano, shook his head and away his body in such a manner that his pointed shadow on the wall, nervous and weary as I was, actually terrified me. It seemed like one of the evil spirits in the fairy tale, screaming forth strange words and phantom notes.

Here this pathetic narrative ends. The translation was at last finished and *Tannhäuser* was produced. The first night it was an equivocal success; (No it wasn't—A.S.S.) the second it was received coldly; on the third it was an unmistakable failure. Wagner's hopes were wrecked, and his ambitious dreams destroyed; and with the destruction of these there vanished also the last faintly-glimmering promise of good fortune for Edward Roche. Wagner, indeed, recovered from the mortification of the failure, but Roche did not; the poor fellow was simply killed by the collapse of *Tannhäuser*. He died in the following December.

BEECHER ON BIRDS.

The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher has been writing on this subject in the *Christian Union*; and thus discourses anent the feathered songsters:—

"People who have been born and bred in the city know nothing of bird-song, except as they hear canaries or other feathered prisoners sing from cages, who sing for a living. This, indeed, is not to be despised, but it is not the singing of free wild birds. Even those who live in the country seldom hear birds sing at their best. People are in bed when the great concert comes off. During May and June, birds wake about half-past three or four o'clock in the morning. Even if one goes to sleep again it is worth his while to be awakened to hear this wonderful outburst. There is nothing else in all the common phenomena of nature that seemed so admirable and so increasingly interesting as this. Birds do not sing alike at all hours of the day. An attentive ear will notice not only very different strains, but a very different spirit. The mid-day singing is casual, not prolonged, a mere interjection here and there. They sing as it were to while away a little time. At evening birds sing next in duration and effect to the morning song, but more tender, less tumultuous. It is in the morning that one must hear them, who would know the full ecstasy. It is very still. The dew lies heavy on all things. In the east the light is coming fast, and twilight every moment gains new radiance. Not a sound gives warning of any coming song. Far off one hears the hoarse hawk of a goose, or the bark of a dog disturbed by some early traveller. Then one hears a single call-note, as if the chorister was calling attention and giving out the pitch. It is answered in an enquiring way by another bird as much as to say, "We are ready, shall we begin?" Then one launches out, but has not uttered two syllables before a score of birds strike in, and then, from the fields, the forest edges, from orchards and gardens, from the grounds, the fences, and the air, then comes a Babel of sweet sounds, running into each other, clashing over-laying and surging together that one cannot distinguish any single songster's note, but only a wild mingling of hundreds of birds, all singing at the very top of their power, as if fired by an ecstasy of gladness. This great gush of song lasts from twenty minutes to half an hour, and then ceases almost as simultaneously as it began. The birds seem then to occupy themselves with their toilet and breakfast, after which, but in a less general way, they sing again for an hour or two. Then they scatter, and pursue the regular business of the day singing but little until evening, unless the day be clouded.—If the morning is overcast, birds do not have their grand sing. But if on such days the noon be clear or tending to clear up, birds become quite vocal. Sunlight has much to do with their disposition to sing. The electrical condition of the atmosphere it is probable, has much to do with this inspiration of song."

The Archbishop of Paris has forbidden Nilsson to sing in opera on account of the death of her mother; at all events, so says an American paper. Did his grace convey the intimation per balloon post?

Mr. P. S. GILMORE appeared as a soloist at one of the Nilsson concerts in Boston, performing the trumpet *obligato* to "Let the bright Seraphim," which was sung by Nilsson. The piece had a tremendous encore, Mr. Gilmore sharing with Nilsson in the applause. Mr. Gilmore had not before appeared as a soloist at a Boston concert for over a dozen years. His appearance on the occasion named was only in compliment to Mdle. Nilsson, who, it should be added, took occasion to show, both publicly and privately, her appreciation of the compliment.

W A I F S.

Mr. John P. Morgan, the well-known organist of New York, is the director of the new musical enterprise called *The Euterpe*.

Adelaide Philipps has entirely recovered her voice, and is travelling through the Western States.

Mrs. Fanny Keller, daughter of Mr. M. Keller, the composer, is soon to make her *début* in concert at Boston.

M. Vieuxtemps has met with a hearty reception from the Bostonians, among whom he was exceedingly popular on his former visit.

Mr. Punch's definition of the great plague of London is—"a barrel-organ." Hear! hear!

Mr. John Barnett (composer of the *Mountain Sylph*) has arrived in London, for the Christmas holidays.

The National Choral Society, under Mr. G. W. Martin, gave its first Christmas *Messiah* performance, at Exeter Hall, on Wednesday night.

Mlle. Christine Nilsson has been attending the flower stand of Mrs. Ogden Doremus at the French Fair in New York. Her sales were enormous.

A concert was given at the Music Hall, Boston, on the 21st ult., in aid of the French sufferers in the present war. M. Vieuxtemps, Dr. Guilmette, Mr. J. H. Wilcox, and other well known artists, assisted.

The Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, are making preparations for their Triennial Festival next spring. The guarantee fund has already reached a large sum.

Mr. and Mrs. German Reed having arranged for a further tenancy of the Gallery of Illustration, have re-appeared in their successful entertainment, *Ages Ago*, assisted by Miss Fanny Holland, Mr. Corney Grain, and Mr. Arthur Cecil. *Baden Baden* and *The Rival Composers*, made up the evening's amusement.

Miss Annie Louise Cary, the contralto of the Nilsson troupe, was welcomed home with great honours. She had gained great applause at every one of the concerts. She has also sang at one or two other concerts with great success. Her old Boston friends have been delighted to find her so finished an artist.

The question of right to reserved seats at concerts, theatres, etc., which has created a good deal of annoyance in some American towns, was recently decided by one of the judges, who held that all seats previously secured by ticket were the property of the person for whom they had been secured, and might be occupied or allowed to remain idle at that particular entertainment, at his or her pleasure.

We read the following in the *Syracuse Daily Courier* (U.S.), of December 10th:—

"Miss Annie Louise Cary intends, it is rumoured, to retire from public singing in the spring, after the close of her engagement with Mr. Strakosch. The cause is an engagement of another character—a matrimonial one with Dr. Hunter, of Philadelphia."

If this be true, the Italian Opera will too easily lose its youngest and most promising *mezzo-soprano-contralto*. From the same paper we subtract the following:—

"Mr. Henry Vieuxtemps, the violinist, closes his engagement with the troupe on the first of April, but will remain in the country until the summer months, making his home in Boston. Next year Mr. Strakosch will bring Adelina Patti to America."

The "troupe" means the Nilsson company, now triumphantly invading every town and city in the States.

A second Daniel writing in a contemporary says:—

"The lovely *entr'acte* in B minor (*Rosamunde*) by that somewhat little appreciated genius, Schubert, was a prominent and welcome feature in the programme. There is another *entr'acte* to the same opera, sweet and most expressive, in B flat; this seems to be little known, at any rate we have never heard it in London."

Daniel the second does not seem to know that Schubert is appreciated just now quite violently, and that the B flat *entr'acte* is familiar to every Crystal-Palace-going amateur.

The Germania Orchestra of Philadelphia has profited by its loss of popularity the last few seasons, and the criticisms it has received, and has gone to work with a great increase of spirit. The sectional extension of the programmes is improved and the ambition of the Society seems to have quite a fresh start. The most important work it has as yet given was Liszt's "Preludes." This was not altogether a satisfactory performance, but will be better when it is repeated. It claims a repertoire of twenty-eight symphonies, eighty-five overtures, a complete selection of operatic selections and waltzes.

The harp, the cherished musical instrument of the Twangiangodillo Principality, is now rarely found in Wales. The Welsh harpers have taken to the turf, and their name is changed to Welsh Sharpers, or Welchers. Alas! Alas! That the only remains of their glory should be the Something-bury races, got up by sporting publicans and sinners not a hundred miles from the Welsh Harp of Hendon. *Punch*.

The Harvard Musical Association of Boston opened their sixth season of Symphony Concerts, on the 3rd. ult. The orchestra is much larger and much better than it was last year. Thomas's visits have done much good, and one of the most marked results has been to wake up this "slow" institution. Mr. Zerrahn is still the conductor, and Mr. B. Listemann is leader. Mr. M. W. Witney and Mr. Hugo Leonard assisted at the opening concert, the former singing two sacred songs by Beethoven, and a bass aria from Bach's *Passion Music*, and the latter playing Beethoven's Piano Concerto, No. 4, in G. The orchestral numbers included Beethoven's Inaugural Overture, in C, Op. 124; Cherubini's prelude to the third act of *Medea*, and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. The performances generally were very good. The second concert took place on the 17th, when the programme embraced Beethoven's first overture to *Leonora* in C; Concerto for the violin, by Lipinski; Liszt's Symphonic Poem, *Les Preludes*; Haydn's Symphony in C minor, No. 9; a *chaconne* for violin, by Bach; and Rietz's Fest Overture. The violin pieces were played by Mr. B. Listemann.

The veteran ex-conductor of the Sacred Harmonic Society, Mr. J. Surman, has addressed the following remarks to a contemporary:—

"When Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* or *Hymn of Praise* was first produced at the Birmingham Festival, the composer himself conducted. *St. Paul* having had such a favourable reception at the Liverpool Festival and Exeter Hall, something good was naturally expected from the hand of the talented composer; and neither the audience nor the orchestra were disappointed, although most agreed that the instrumental movements were the finest portions of the work. The duet with chorus, 'I waited for the Lord,' certainly produced a marked impression; but there was a depression of band and chorus till they finished the first part of the concert with their old friend Handel's glorious chorus from *Judas Maccabæus*, 'We never will bow down,' which roused the whole orchestra from their lethargy. Even Mendelssohn himself could not remain among the audience, but came in the most humble and unobtrusive manner and took part from my book, joining with me and the rest of the tenors most efficiently. His sharp eye and fine ear detected a wrong note in the copy, which, taking out his pencil, he corrected. After a short interval, the second part of the concert commenced with 'Immortal Lord' and 'See the proud chief,' from Handel's *Deborah*; the whole orchestra seemed inspired, and sang with new life and vigour those matchless compositions. Mendelssohn was again at his post, and joined in most ably through both of the choruses, and when we had finished he admitted that Handel was the 'proud chief,' for he held up both his hands and exclaimed 'Ah! this man puts the extinguisher on us all!'"

The following remarks from *Land and Water* will have the approval of everybody worth consideration:—

"Perhaps the social reformers of the present time will be able to glance a little beyond their regions of theatrical morals and educational permeation at the simple butchery of the acrobat that is of almost daily occurrence in this kingdom. Scarcely a town that can boast of 10,000 inhabitants can exist in these improving days without a musical hall, and no musical hall can exist without catering to the tastes of the million. The million craves for comic songs, break-downs, and acrobats. The last-mentioned must be possessed of as much foolhardiness as agility, if they wish for anything beyond a temporary engagement. The more danger that they can import into their performance, the better the spectators are pleased, the higher their salary. A man who can turn two back-somersaults, at some dizzy height, is worth double the ordinary creature who prefers to do so near the ground. The audience creates the demand—the acrobat must supply it. Only last Tuesday, Liverpool was the scene of two serious accidents; in one a woman, in the other a man, while going through a dangerous feat, fell, and were both seriously hurt. This might have been prevented by the ordinary protection-nets that are generally used in London. There is some expense attached to their use, perhaps, and the morbid craving of a gaping crowd that watches every tremor of a muscle at some terrible height, with a half-stupified gaze and secret wish to be present when the accident occurs—should like just to see it—would receive its quietus, and turn elsewhere for excitement. The police ought to have the same control over the dangers as they do over the morals of music-halls, and then we should protect a hard-working and ill-paid class, the acrobats; and, at the same time, indirectly destroy the gross increase of sensationalism that, fungus-like, is choking the growth of all legitimate exhibitions. The *ipse dixit* of an inspector would go a long way to put down these spurious gymnastics."

MUSIC RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

CRAMER & Co.—"The Maid of the Dee," Scotch ballad, the symphonies and accompaniments by William Hutchinsons Calcott.
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'As zephyr, telling secrets to his rose;'

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'for with my mind I listen,
And when the leaves of sound are shed upon it,
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